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THE BIBLE
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JOSIAH BLAKE TIDWELL, D.D., LL.D.

THE BIBLE
PERIOD BY PERIOD

JOSIAH BLAKE TIDWELL, D.D., LL.D.

Author of "The Bible Book by Book," "The Gospels and the Life of Christ," "The Sunday School Teacher Magnified," "John and His Five Books," "Concerning Preachers," "Thinking Straight on the Bible," etc.

BROADMAN PRESS
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

DISCARD

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Sunday School Board
Southern Baptist Convention
Nashville, Tennessee

Printed in the United States of America
500—9-41—3

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The author accepts without question the inspiration and authoritativeness of the Bible as the word of God. He thinks that it contains the revelation of God's will to men; that in it may be found the knowledge of the redemption which he has provided for them; that it contains instructions which alone furnish the basis of wise and worthy conduct both for individuals and nations; that all men should avail themselves of every possible opportunity to acquaint themselves with its teachings, and that all Christians should be faithful and even aggressive in their efforts to teach its truths.

During the years of teaching of the Bible in Baylor University, where now about six hundred annually come under his instruction, the author has found that the best results are obtained when the pupil is directed to study the Bible itself rather than things about it. This book, therefore, like all his other volumes, is more in the nature of an outline or guide than of a discussion. Only a small amount of introductory discussion is given. In this reference is made to the most striking events of the period, and such outlines of the contents are given as to furnish the student with a brief but comprehensive view of the whole. Certain lessons or teachings are drawn from each period, and then the student is furnished with a large number of topics for study and discussion. For the most part these topics require the searching of the Scripture itself and, if properly followed, will give the student a splendid knowledge of the contents of the Scriptures. The aim is to furnish the pupil with a clue to study, and what is said in discussion is in the endeavor to create a zest for truth that will lead to a thorough investigation of the subject in hand.

It is hoped that this will become a companion book to the author's "The Bible Book by Book," which is soon to have its fourth edition, and is now used in many of the colleges. The present volume divides the whole Bible in periods and studies, and the main facts and characteristics of each are surveyed.

If this book shall become as helpful as has its companion, if schools and colleges shall use it for a text book in Biblical history; if Sunday-school classes, young people's societies, and women's societies shall make it the basis for their study; if pastors and other religious workers will use it as a part of their study, the work incident to its preparation will be amply repaid.

Waco, Texas. J. B. T.

PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

This new edition of **The Bible Period by Period** is but another step in the growth of the book. The first edition was a small outline of 125 pages published in 1916. In 1923 it was enlarged to a volume of 359 pages, which has had several printings, thereby indicating that it has been found valuable to at least a considerable number of Bible students.

In this new and enlarged edition there has been added a brief statement concerning each of the historical books of the Bible, showing their position in the whole of Scripture revelation. A discussion of the prophets and their messages, and of the poetical books, has been introduced in their proper historical setting. In the New Testament each book has been considered, indicating the authors and dates wherever they are known. Each book is studied as a part of the history under consideration, as for instance, the books of Paul, written while on the second or third missionary journey, are made a part of the story of that journey. In every case, there has been given a brief outline of the book to help the student read it with the greatest possible profit.

The author believes that the book has finished its gradual development, and is full grown. He believes that it contains practically all that a handbook of Bible history should include. He expresses profound gratitude for the reception accorded the former editions, and for all the good the book has already done. He sends forth this new and improved edition with a prayer that it may do a still greater service in the future.

J. B. TIDWELL.

Waco, Texas.

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CHAPTER I

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RACE

(Genesis 1—11)

From Creation to the Call of Abraham

INTRODUCTORY

1. **Importance.** It would be very difficult to overstimate the value and importance of the study of the Bible. Professor William Lyon Phelps, Professor of English Literature in Yale University, says: "I believe knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible." It holds an important place in all Christian thinking and the most of it is prized by Jews and Gentiles alike. It is respected and used in lodges and fraternal organizations, in legislative halls, and in courts of justice. Its stories are repeated in all the homes of the Christian and Jewish world. Its teachings have found place in the history of most great peoples, and furnish much of the thought and inspiration of all that is best in modern literature. It has been translated into hundreds of languages and dialects, and has won a place so unusual that a knowledge of it is a necessary part of a liberal education. Added interest and importance is given to the study of it by the work of archeologists who have uncovered and translated an enormous amount of historical records that have been buried for centuries. This vast literature has given us a better understanding of the customs and conflicts of Biblical times and peoples, and has made Bible study more interesting and necessary.

2. **Historical Significance.** The Bible contains some of the sublimest lessons of personal heroism, some accounts of shameful failure, and some of the richest treasures of literature known to the world. It is a unique collection of narrative, poetry, essays, addresses, and stories, which, taken together, tell the story of many centuries of the political, social and religious growth of the world. It uses all the human sources of information—whether oral, traditional, or written laws and documents, and traces them back to their very beginnings. Even the plan and work of redemption are unfolded in a historical way and can best be understood, if studied historically. Above all, Bible history is valuable because of its religious significance. It traces the upward climb of mankind to a comprehension of God in his relation to men. It makes a plea for the recognition of God's place in the universe and interprets all history as the working out of the perfect purposes of his benevolent interests in the race. It reveals causes and effects in history and shows the evil results of sin and the good results of righteousness, with the blessing of God upon the good and his curse upon the bad. The first book of it reaches back beyond all sources of human information, and the last one reveals the unknown future. Both rest upon divine revelation. It is, therefore, a divine and supernatural history and has a fundamental religious interest. It follows the upward religious growth of the world from the most primitive to the most exalted stages of spiritual experience. Some sections of it will have a helpful word for those of every religious condition, and will furnish a practical Christian solution of every social, moral and religious problem that may confront us.

Once more, Bible history furnishes the basis for the study of universal history. In following the history of the Hebrews it gives some account of the nations, the institutions, the character of culture and the civilization with which they were surrounded. It touches the history of Egypt, Babylon, Phoenicia, Syria, Assyria, Chaldea, Persia, Greece and Rome, and many less important nations, and furnishes a sort of bond of history that is necessary in interpreting and understanding the history

f these empires. Moreover, the study of Bible history ill help us to realize the true value of historical study. Ve do not study history merely to collect and classify acts, nor to satisfy curiosity, but to gain equipment or intelligent and efficient service to our own nation nd time. We aim to better understand our world, to void the mistakes and errors of others, and to gain orthy incentives to the noblest citizenship. The stuent of history should be inspired with a sincere ambiion for safe leadership and should gain some wholeome convictions concerning national policies. He hould come to see that we are living in God's world nd that life, either individual or national, is best lived hen in harmony with his great divine plan. This is he true value of all historical study and can be found o where else as in Bible history.

3. **This Period.** This period extends from the creaion to the call of Abraham and is the longest period f all. It is called the period of direct administration, ecause God is represented as dealing with the whole uman race as individuals. Each person is approached irectly (Gen. 3: 9; 4: 6; 5: 22; 6: 13), there being no ediation of priest or ruler as in later times.

4. **Scope and Purpose of These Narratives.** Besides any minor and subordinate things we are here given he facts concerning: (1) The beginning of the physial universe which God created. (2) The beginning of nan as the creature of God. (3) The beginning of sin, which was introduced into the world through the disbedience of man. (4) The beginning of condemnation nd judgment upon sin, in the destruction of individuals, f cities and of the world. (5) The beginning of reemption, seen alike in the promises and types of the ook and in the chosen family. (6) The beginning of ivilization, various elements and arts of which are ound. The chief value of the stories lies in their reigious teaching. Viewed as a whole, these eleven chapers form a very natural introduction to the whole Bible. They emphasize the great spiritual truth that he entire universe and man had their origin in God. hey indicate the various factors at work in human istory and reveal the continuing purpose of God in

its development. They impress us with the religious ideas which one must have in mind, if one reads the Bible with a becoming reverence and intelligence. Above all, they emphasize the sovereignty of God. He is prior to, and separated from, all finite and physical things, and is holy and benevolent in his nature. It is all given as a background, leading up to the call of Abraham, whose family and nation issue in Jesus, who is the chief interest in the entire Bible record. The narrative falls into three sections. (1) From the creation to the fall, Gen. 1—3. (2) From the fall to the flood, Gen. 4: 1—9: 17. (3) From the flood to Abraham, Gen. 9: 18—11: 32.

SECTION I. FROM THE CREATION TO THE FALL

(Chapters 1—3)

5. **Book of Genesis.** The book of Genesis is of incalculable importance. The name Genesis means beginning, origin or creation. Its leading thought is creation and we should study it with a view to finding out the beginning of everything the beginning of which is recorded in it. It alone gives us knowledge of those events that transpired before Moses. It is of great value to science by setting out several facts which indicate the general plan of the universe and furnish the basis for scientific research. Without Genesis the Bible would be incomplete. We would know nothing of the origin of the universe and man and sin, nothing of the flood or of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and nothing of the beginning of the Hebrew race or the beginning of God's revelation to man. Genesis is probably the most important book in the Bible. The facts recorded in it are so referred to in the rest of the Bible that we must know it, if we are to understand the rest of its books. Then, too, it covers more than half of the time of all Old Testament history. More than all else it is important religiously. In it is to be found the germ of all the truth unfolded in the Scripture and to know this book well is to know God's plan for blessing man. Briefly it may be outlined as follows: (1) Creation, Chaps. 1-2. (2) The Fall, Chap. 3. (3) The Flood, Chaps.

-9. (4) The Nations, Chaps. 10-11. (5) Abraham, 12: -25: 18. (6) Isaac, 25: 19-36. (7) Jacob, including oseph, Chaps. 37-50.

6. **Man's Innocence.** The time here extends from the reation to the expulsion from the garden. Adam and Eve were in a state of innocence and lacked the sense f shame and guilt that followed their disobedience. But they were under obligation to keep their innocence y abstaining from the fruit of the tree of the knowldge of good and evil. Their failure in this test has proven the most destructive of all man's failures, and was the signal for their expulsion from their beautiful ome in the Garden of Eden.

7. **Problems Solved by This Story.** Every generation as asked such questions as, "What is the origin of the material world?" "What is the origin of life?" "What s the origin of sin?" In general, philosophers have ield (and much of what science has to say about these natters is not science, but speculative philosophy) that natter was eternal and simply asked how it came to ts present state. All of these philosophers and their heories easily divide themselves into two groups: (1) he materialists whose theory, broadly stated, is that n active principle—inherent in the existent matter, nd working through long ages—brought about the resent state of things. (2) The pantheists, whose heory is that everything emanated from a common, ivine substance working everywhere in nature. Phiosophy, therefore, solves no problems of origins.

But this brief story sets at rest all this inquiry. It nforms us that matter was not eternal, and that it did ot come into existence by chance, but that it was reated out of nothing by our eternal God. Incidentally, t sets forth the majesty and glory of God and man's ependence upon and obligation to him. It also exlains the origin of sin and all man's ills and death. One word from the inspired record solves the whole roblem. "In the beginning God created the heavens nd the earth." God is the solution. Accept him and ll else follows. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. 33: 9).

8. **Form of the Creative Story.** For conciseness, concreteness, picturesqueness and beauty, and for naturalness of method the story of creation is not excelled in all literature. In five brief, beautiful paragraphs it shows how God, as a creative Spirit, acting through six successive periods, prepared the world for the residence of man and put him on it. He then recurs to the story of the creation of man with whom he is especially concerned, and gives more in detail the facts concerning his creation, condition, duties and blessings, along with the danger to which he was exposed.

The first chapter has the rhythm of a great poem with the same refrain at the close of each stanza (verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31). It describes an orderly progress of creation according to the will and word of God, and in beautiful language shows how the whole universe finds its explanation in God. It is especially a poem about God and his works. The four great verses of the chapter are verses 1, 27, 28, 31. They describe, or declare, the creative power and work of God, man's likeness to God, his place in the created universe and the perfection of God's work. These are put at the very beginning of the narrative and furnish one with a good start for all religious thinking.

9. **God's Acts of Creation.** The term "create" means to originate and is used three times in the first chapter. In each case God is represented as bringing into existence a new order of creation. In verse 1 we have the record of the creation of the physical or non-living matter of the universe. From this matter all material forms have been developed. In verse 21 we are told that he created animal life, thereby crossing the line between the living and the non-living. In verse 27 he is said to have created human or spiritual life. Each of these orders of creation was capable of large and varied development, and out of the three have come all things that exist. On the seventh day God rested. This does not mean that he was fatigued, but that he ceased his creative work. Nor has he ever done any more creating. The universe is complete and God is still resting from his creative enterprise.

10. **Man's Creation.** In the specific manner of man's creation the presence and activity of Jehovah is especially emphasized. He shaped the body out of the dust of the earth and then breathed into the nostrils of that human form that which made him become a living soul. He thus gave to man's nature both a material and a spiritual side. He has a body, but also an intellectual and moral capacity. It is this that marks him as being in the image of God and implies his destined position as possessor of the earth and its products. The creation of woman was supernatural just as that of man and provided for man a helpful companionship. She was created out of a part of his body to meet an inborn need, and to provide through a oneness of nature the eternal grounds of marriage. Here is the basis upon which the two in marriage are to become one flesh, and by reason of which a man must "love his wife as his own flesh." One who reverently reads this story will be impressed with the sacredness of the true relation of the sexes, the natural protection which woman deserves from man, her fitness to share life with him, and the beauty and wonderful sacredness of true marriage.

11. **His Original Condition.** The original state of man is described in most beautiful and expressive terms. He had every possible advantage for the exercise of his natural capacities and for the realization of his deepest needs. He was created morally upright and pure from all defilement. He was given world dominion, which, but for sin, would soon have put him in control of all world forces. Tasks were provided that would call forth earnest effort and prevent the waste of idle powers. The pair had the highly satisfactory fellowship of each other and also the communion and fellowship of God. Not being a sinner, man was not under the power of death and besides had access to the tree of life which gave him the possibility of an endless life. There was one restriction put upon him. He must respect law, control his liberty and bring his selfish desires into subjection. God had put him as sovereign over the earth, but he in turn must be in subjection to God who had thus exalted him.

12. **His Home and Occupation.** As soon as man was created God put him in a beautiful garden-home. The name of this garden was Eden, which means "a delight." Though it is minutely described we do not positively know its location. But most students and explorers think it lay on the highlands of Armenia, where the Euphrates and Tigris rivers have their rise. In this home of "delight" God caused to grow everything good for food and encompassed gold and other resources sufficient for all man's physical and spiritual needs. In this garden were two trees of special symbolic significance, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. One was designed to test their obedience to God; the other had the power of giving an endless life or was an emblem and pledge of the higher and more confirmed state that would be given as a reward for that obedience. Occupation was provided that would exercise and develop every part of his nature. He was to exercise his body in dressing and keeping the garden, and in the work of conquest over the physical world. He exercised his mind in naming the animals and in making plans to subdue the earth. His soul found satisfying activity in the companionship of Eve, his helpmate, and in the fellowship of God, his Creator.

13. **Importance of the Story of Man's Sin.** The chief interest of the whole Biblical story centers in the incidents we are here considering. Only a minor importance attaches to the science or history, as such, which underlies all of it. Little concern is aroused as to where Eden was located. But eternal interests are involved in man's first probation, in his temptations and fall, and in the promise of redemption described in this chapter.

Men are conscious that they are sinners. They know that all the world has gone wrong and are asking the question: "How did sin originate?" "Is God the author of sin?" "Can man redeem himself?" "How can God save man?" "How did salvation begin to be revealed?" These questions, in one form or another, lie at the root of all religions, and make the story of Adam's sin a story of enduring interest. Indeed, all the rest of the Bible is a revelation of the issues raised here.

14. **The Temptation.** The story proceeds on the basis that there was already a race of fallen beings in the universe, and that Satan, the chief of these, had the mysterious power of tempting others to follow him. The narrative clearly makes him not simply an evil influence or the personification of sin, but an evil person who is the very antithesis of God. In the temptation he assumed the form of a serpent—a creature least likely to be suspected and, thereby, deceived Eve. Throughout the Bible Satan is held to be the very embodiment of all wickedness. Adam was not deceived as was the woman, but sinned wilfully and, therefore, received the chief blame for the sin.

There are several forms or elements of the temptation. (1) The miracle of the talking serpent. Such an appearance would impress her with the idea of the superhuman, and lead her to think he knew better than she did. (2) Eve herself had not heard the command of God, but had learned it from Adam, to whom God had originally given it. She could, therefore, be led to doubt whether she understood it, whether he really forbade this fruit, or whether she understood the penalty. (3) There is implied a question concerning the goodness and wisdom of God. The devil's inquiry raised the question: "Would it be wise or good of God to withhold from her that which had in it so much of value for her?" (4) There was an appeal to curiosity that was well nigh irresistible. This is clearly felt in connection with Satan's questioning of God's warning. (5) There was in it an implied dare. She saw in it a sort of challenge. Here is where men frequently fail. (6) It appealed to the three most dangerous elements of fleshly nature. (a) It was good for food and so appealed to the cravings of appetite, to the lust of the flesh. (b) It was beautiful to look upon and aroused the aesthetic sense, thereby appealing to the pride of the eye. (c) It had the power to make her wise even like God, and aroused curiosity and the desire for knowledge and power. This was an appeal to the pride of life. (7) She was told that she had a mistaken idea of the penalty—that she should "not surely die."

Taken as a whole the temptation was to fall upward—to try to better herself. Such is the fundamental element of all temptation. The motives employed—the satisfaction of the natural appetites, the desire for knowledge and power, and the love for beauty—were in themselves worthy, and under other circumstances, would have inspired noble and righteous actions. But the sin was that they impelled her to turn her back upon the nobler impulses of gratitude, love and duty to God. The whole story, with its suggestion of doubt, impresses us with the fact, everywhere taught in the Scripture, that man's sin had its origin in unbelief.

15. **The Fall.** The fearful results of their sin were felt at once. Immediately a great change came over them. They became conscious of guilt and alienation and, being filled with fear, tried to hide themselves from Jehovah. Their eyes were opened to see their own nakedness. Their souls lost communion with God and became corrupt, which is spiritual death. But there were also future and judicial results. God came and passed judgment on them. The woman was given a place of suffering and subordination, and the terrible plight of downtrodden and suffering women throughout all lands and all ages, and even to-day, where Christ is not known, tells the sad story of this judgment on her sin. Man was condemned to a life of toil and final death. By a painful struggle he would wrest a livelihood from the earth and death would be the final sad end of that struggle.

Viewed as a whole, their sin introduced pain and death. Their bodies became subject to pain and decay and death, and they brought a like curse upon all their posterity. Every manifestation of pain, every necessary drudgery, every earthly disorder, whether of storm, or flood, or earthquake, every grim hour of death is a fresh declaration of the awful tragedy of Adam's fall. Moreover, the story is full of the teaching that these two were responsible for the sin they had committed, and for the far-reaching results of it. They were representatives of the race, and illustrate what goes on in every human life, and put us on warning that we, and not God, are responsible for our sin. And more, it declares that no matter what his condition of birth, or his state of environment,

every normal man is clothed with sufficient intelligence and freedom to make him responsible for all his religious choices.

16. **The Hope Offered.** The gloom of this sad story of sin and its consequent results in pain and punishment was somewhat relieved by certain elements of hope. The man and his wife are not beyond the pale of God's love. They are not forsaken of him, nor left in the long conflict with evil without hope of victory. There are three elements of hope: (1) A great promise (3: 15). One would come who would contend with the tempter, crush his head and repair the damage of the fall. Beginning with the story of Cain and Abel in the next chapter, all the rest of the Bible is but the unfolding of the plan and work of God in fulfilling this promise. The story of it ends in a vision of the Apocalypse in which Jesus, our Deliverer, is triumphant and Satan is cast into the bottomless pit. (2) The coverings of skins of animals. These were suited for their needs and allowed them again to have the fellowship of God. Most writers and students find in this incident a suggestion of the covering of righteousness that comes to guilty sinners through the death of Jesus. (3) An altar of justice and mercy. At the east side of the Garden were the cherubim and flaming sword where, in symbol, abode the presence or "The face of the Lord" (4: 14). This was the place of worship where our first parents with their families came with their sacrifices. It was intended to keep open the way to the tree of life, so that from the day man first sinned there has been opened a way of salvation through the mercy of God.

17. **Traditions of Creation.** (1) Babylonian accounts. One story tells how the god, Marduk, when all lands were seas and nothing had been made, laid a reed on the waters, formed dust and poured on it and thus made the earth. It tells how he formed man and the seed of man; how he created all living things, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and all grass and reeds and forests; how he caused the moon-god to shine forth, trusted him with the night and set him to determine the days. A recent tablet makes him say, "My blood will I take and bone will I form, I will make man"; and

again, "I will create men who shall inherit the earth, that the service of the gods may be established and their shrines built." Another story among the Babylonians was concerning a primitive hero named Eabani, who was created by a goddess from a bit of clay. He was clad only in long hairy locks and, in a state of savageness, ate and sported with wild animals. Finally, a beautiful woman was sent to him and, by her charms, succeeded in wooing him away from his strange companions and barbarous life. (2) Other creation stories. The Phoenicians and Egyptians and almost all primitive peoples have myths by which they explain the origin of the world. In many of them the resemblance to the Biblical version is so striking that one can hardly believe that they were not kindred stories. Of all these, those having to do with a primitive state of happiness are probably the most striking. Indeed, all peoples seem to think that the world was once purer and better and happier than now. Hesiod, Virgil, Tibullus, and Ovid have all sung of the bright morning of the world. They used legends of the golden age which corroborate the story of the Paradise of Eden.

18. **Traditions of the Fall.** (1) There are stories that connect the fall with the influence of the serpent. Such accounts are seen: (a) In the Dragon of Tiamat in the Chaldean legends. He was considered the living principle of the sea and of chaos, or disorder, and opposed their deities at the creation of the world. He was thought to have led men to sin. (b) The promise of recovery through the destruction of the serpent may also be traced in various legends. Krishna, who was one of the Hindu incarnations of the Almighty, is represented as attacking and destroying the great serpent, and is pictured with his feet on the serpent's head. (2) There are stories of the fall itself. The Greeks considered man's fall as going by gentle degrees from the golden to the iron age. The Hindus bring him through a second and third age into the state existing at their time. The Persian tradition tells of a region of bliss where man and woman lived in purity and innocence and in perfect happiness, subsisting on fruit, and especially on the fruit of a tree intended to give them im-

ortality. This they did until a demon tempted them o disobey God's command. It explains that he caused nother tree to spring up in the garden, and by acting hrough a serpent, persuaded them to eat of its fruit. This fruit corrupted them and put in them such evil ispositions that they began to worship that demon nstead of the Hindu God, and fell under the power of in and misery. The Chinese tradition represents man s being at first innocent and happy and as having fallen y an inordinate and wicked desire for knowledge, or hrough the flattery and temptation of a woman. One an hardly believe that all these traditions have no con- ection with the Genesis account.

19. **Teachings of the Story.** This story sets forth the ollowing facts concerning history and religion: (1) hat there is a personal Creator and Ruler back of all ature. (2) That the highest product of God's creation s man, for whom he retains the tenderest solicitude and are. (3) That all the beauties and blessings of the vorld with all its plants and animals were created for he sake of man. (4) That since man and woman were reated for each other, marriage is a sacred obligation, ased upon their nature and that by it the highest needs of each may best be met. (5) That sin in man lid not originate in God, but in man's yielding to his aser instead of his nobler and diviner motives. (6) hat innocence is not a guarantee against temptation, nor is it an assurance of safety. (7) That there is a per- onal, evil devil who tempts man and misrepresents and assails God. (8) That sin as a cause brings its own unishment, the worst of which is the separation of the ndividual from harmonious relations with God, which s spiritual death. (9) That God is still interested in man, though a sinner, and makes provisions for his hysical needs and promises spiritual blessing to him.

20. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** Some topics will be suitable for review as a means of helping the student to certify his knowledge and, as a guide to the teacher, in testing the thoroughness of the student's work and will be suited for classroom discussion. Others will serve as themes upon which the teacher may require written reports or theme papers. For this

study the following should be considered: (1) Condition of the material universe when God began to prepare it for man's abode. (2) In what respect does the Genesis record of creation agree and disagree with science? (3) In what respect is man in the image of God? (4) What are the lessons of the creation of Eve? (5) Things in the story indicating the pre-eminence of man in God's creation. (6) Purpose of the two trees of the garden that are specially mentioned and the lessons growing out of them. (7) Place of prohibitory laws and restraints in the formation of character. (8) What about Adam's freedom? (9) Did God's prohibition take away man's freedom? Should law ever go so far as to compel obedience? (10) Ills of life that are the result of some one's sin. (11) Methods and power of evil temptations. (12) What methods and purposes of punishment for wrong-doing are discovered here? (13) Character and personality of God and of Satan as seen here. (14) Lesson derived from God's interest in and care for fallen man.

SECTION II. FROM THE FALL TO THE FLOOD

(Genesis 4: 1—9: 17)

21. **Facts and Conditions.** The last section left man with a knowledge of good and evil. That there was light enough to enable him to know how to be saved and that some were saved are evident from the experiences of such men as Enoch, who pleased God and was translated and Noah and his family who were saved from the flood. The facts narrated are: (1) That during this time the race made great progress in civilization and also developed great and unbearable wickedness. (2) That a divine judgment in the nature of a flood was sent upon the wicked world. This flood was not a great cataclysm resulting from natural causes, but a judgment of God sent to destroy a sinful people. (3) That the righteous found favor in God's sight and were delivered safely beyond his judgments against the wicked.

22. **Common Parentage of Men.** This story indicates at all men sprang from a common pair. They began fe in a very simple way, with but little knowledge, and, y degrees, gained the knowledge of the arts of useful- ess and of beauty. And all of our experience in deal- g with men bears out the Scripture view that human nature wherever found is essentially the same. Sin as spread out among all people and has affected all asses in a similar way. The gospel also has mani- sted similar results in the transformation of the char- cter of people of every degree of intelligence and cul- ure. In this is seen the unity of the race as having a ommon human ancestor and divine Creator.

This Biblical view that all races and nations are but ifferent branches of the same great family is very ex- raordinary when compared with the narrow view of ost ancient nations who refused to acknowledge kin- ip with others. It furnishes the basis for the com- on rule of their Creator and allows the Hebrews to ulfill their mission of blessing to all people. More- ver, scientists are now largely of this same opinion— hat God created man, not men—a single pair, not many airs—and that all races have sprung from that pair.

23. **Cain and Abel.** These two sons were no doubt orn unto Adam and Eve soon after their expulsion rom the garden. They were alike in nature, being of ne same parentage, and alike in environment, but they iffered in occupation, one being a farmer and the other shepherd. Both seem to have been attentive to wor- ip, but they differed in the offerings presented and the spirit in which the offerings were made. Cain rought a thank-offering from the field such as Adam nd Eve might have made before the fall. It expressed o sense of sin nor desire for pardon. By faith (Heb. 1: 4) Abel brought a sin offering. This probably eans that he relied upon the promise and apprehended ne truth that "without the shedding of blood there is o remission" (Heb. 9: 22; 12: 24). One was an humble eliever, the other a self-righteous unbeliever. It was case of Pharisee and publican at the gate of Eden.

These two represent two types running through all ne Bible, and, indeed, through all history—the un-

checked power of evil and the triumph of faith. They represent two types of religion and portray the true spirit of each. Then, as in all succeeding ages, true worshipers are persecuted and put to death by false worshipers. Thus, Cain became the first of a long line of blood-stained men, and Abel the first of the mighty roll of God's martyr heroes. And all of this was because Cain did not, as did Abel, bring an offering that God could accept. Adam and Eve saw one of their sons murder another, and thus early began to reap the fruit of their sin.

In spite of the great crime which Cain had committed, and in spite of the fact that God found it necessary to send him away from the place of worship, he showed mercy upon him and decreed that he should not be destroyed. In this we have a solemn warning that we are not to persecute or injure any man simply because of his religious beliefs.

24. **Cain and Seth—Two Races.** In the death of Abel the true worship of God had a long backset until the birth of Seth who had the same spirit. These two—Cain and Seth—became the heads of two races so different that the former is called the sons of men and the latter the sons of God. (1) The descendants of Cain. This was an enterprising, but ungodly race devoted to the arts of civilization, to manufacture, to building cities and to worldly comfort and success in the pursuit of earthly good. We are given the names of six outstanding men of this race, the last being Lamech, in whom the Cain spirit of the brutal triumph of the sword is personified. He married two wives, thus originating the practice of polygamy and committed gross murder (4: 19, 23). The Cain line gives us two lessons: (a) That material civilization is not a divine gift, but a purely human development. (b) That civilization is not religion and cannot be substituted for it. (2) The descendants of Seth. Seth was chosen as the head of the spiritual branch of mankind. His race was to be the instrument of the world's religious uplift and ultimate redemption. This race was less ardent in worldly pursuits, but gave birth to men like Enoch, who walked with God and did not have to

ie, and Noah, who was chosen to build the ark and erpetuate the race, and to be the one through whom he Saviour would come. In the records of this race en names are given, ending in Noah, and we are given uch suggestive statements as "Men began to call upon he name of the Lord," and "Enoch walked with God nd was not, for God took him." Here is suggested both ivine fellowship and blessed immortality.

Concerning the longevity attributed to these antediluvians two or three things may be said. (1) It is ndorsed and corroborated by tradition. Rawlinson ays the tradition was general. Babylonians, Egyptians nd Chinese thought the earliest men lived thousands f years; Greeks and Romans limited the age to eight undred or a thousand years; Hindus taught that at first nan was free from disease and ordinarily lived four undred years. (2) It is attacked by science as being mpossible. Some scientists say that each name must ave represented a tribe, or group, or was figurative f the age or dispensation in which he lived. But ow does science know that conditions are the same ow as then? Some animals lived longer then han now. Why not man? Sin and hereditary disease nd vicious indulgences had not affected and weakened he race as it has in our day. (3) A merciful provision. uch long lives would have contributed to the rapid increase of the race and to the spread of knowledge and rt. In the absence of written records it would have elped preserve the knowledge of God and his worship. Noah could have known the personal friends of Adam, nd after the flood, could have given first hand information concerning the fall and later events. Let us refer he matter to God, and like Jamison, Fausset and Brown say, "It is wise to resolve the fact into the overeign will of God."

25. **Antediluvian Civilization.** The Biblical record of he antediluvians is very brief, but it clearly teaches hat they were not savages, but had attained a considerable degree of civilization. Two facts are emphasized: (1) Their general civil progress. There were ities (Gen. 4: 17), tent makers and herdsmen (Gen. : 20), musicians (4: 21) and metallurgists (4: 22). But

before there could be tents there must be material and skill and labor in preparing that material. To build cities required builders and tools and material and architecture. Musicians require instruments which cannot be made without tools and material. The brass and iron required that there be mines and smelters. These suggestions indicate something of their development. (2) Their great wickedness. Their wickedness beggars all description. (a) There was forgetfulness of God. The Cainites left God out of their thoughts and proved that science and art and civilization, apart from religion, do not purify the heart and save society from corruption. (b) The social sin was rampant. The lust of Lamech led him to take two wives (Gen. 4: 19) and thus to introduce the baneful practise of polygamy. The godly sons of Seth became enamored with the godless daughters of Cain and, by marriage, responded to lust instead of religious persuasion. (c) There was murder and violence. The writer repeats to us the blood-song of victorious Lamech to his two wives (Gen. 4: 23) and also tells us that "the earth was full of violence" (Gen. 6: 11). (d) Sinful imaginations were the rule. So evil had they become that all of their thoughts had become evil (Gen. 6: 5). This is the supreme wickedness, that it has become the master of the meditations and purposes of our hearts.

The Scripture implies that this great wickedness resulted from the intermarriage of the descendants of Seth with those of Cain and that it brought on the flood. This unlawful union of the religious with the irreligious, or this admixture of true and false religions, wrecked their faith and plunged them into such wickedness that God determined to destroy the whole wicked race (Gen. 6: 7), and set the time of the flood at one hundred and twenty years. But before destroying them he sent Noah to them to preach "righteousness" (2 Pet. 2: 5). By this message, which no doubt dealt with their immorality and corruption, and by the building of the ark, which was a visible sign, God warned them of their danger and made them responsible for their own ruin, as well as showed forth his mercy and long suffering toward the sinner.

26. **Noah, God's Chosen Man.** Noah is one of those men whose names are associated with great epochs. He was a heroic figure in an apostate age, who had the courage to stand alone and dared to lead where but few followed. The Bible says he found favor in the eyes of Jehovah (Gen. 6: 8), probably meaning that his character and acts were acceptable to him. At his birth his father, Lamech, who was a godly man, was seized with a spirit of inspiration and saw in him the hope of deliverance from the toil growing out of the curse placed upon Adam for his sin. He, therefore, named him Noah, which means "rest." He was a just and perfect man who walked with God (Gen. 6: 9; 7: 1; see 1 Pet. 3: 20; Heb. 11: 7). He sucessfully outrode the waters of the flood and, as a monument to his life of duty, saved his own family from destruction. He was the first man who, through his own righteousness and work, saved others from destruction, and in that became a type of Jesus who saves us from destruction.

27. **The Ark.** The Ark was built according to the pattern received from Jehovah. It was a box-like boat three stories high, and, counting a cubit twenty-one inches, was 525 feet long, 87½ feet wide, and 52½ feet deep. To build it was a huge undertaking, but not one beyond the resources of the times, or out of harmony with the extraordinary capacity of early people for colossal works. Its building was both a warning to the people of the time and an expression of the faith of the builder. By faith also Noah entered the Ark before the flood began and truly became "heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11: 7). Besides his family the Ark contained "all food that is eaten," both for man and beast and all kinds of animals and fowls and creeping things. Thus was provision made for the perpetuation of all species, and for worship when the flood was over.

28. **The Flood.** (1) Its cause. The flood was an act of Deity. Its primary, or moral cause, centers in the righteousness of Noah and the triumph of good and in the punishment of a wicked people. Its secondary, or natural cause was in two things: first, forty days of incessant rain; second, the breaking up of the fountains

of the deep. Either the dry land sank, or the land under the sea rose so that water rushed in and covered the entire land. The use of these natural means does not destroy the miraculous in it, but shows how God still controls the forces of the earth which he created. (2) The extent and duration. The Bible declares that it covered "all the hills . . . that were under the whole heaven." This Scripture statement corresponds to the geological evidence of a widespread deluge. But the submergence of only the inhabited portion of the earth would account for both the Scripture demands and for the universal tradition of a flood. In all, it lasted one year and ten days—seven months before the Ark rested on Ararat and five months and ten days more before the ransomed company departed from it (Gen. 7: 11; 8: 14).

There is no description of the horrors of the flood. We can imagine those outside of the Ark trying to get out of reach of the rising waters. But nothing could deliver them from the destruction which God had determined against sin. Everywhere there is defeat and death. Bleached and bloodless corpses were afloat everywhere. There is an awful stillness and desolation —a vast expanse of ocean with not a sound of life, only the low moan of the surging waters. And what solemn feelings must have prevailed in the Ark. This ransomed family, conscious of the destruction which had been brought on the outside, would have felt a holy awe of God. And when they remembered their own escape they were surely filled with wonder and praise. Their sense of humility and unworthiness and of utter dependence in the hands of the great God was no doubt overwhelming.

29. **Sacrifice and Rainbow Covenant.** Upon leaving the Ark Noah erected an altar to Jehovah and offered thereon a sacrifice consisting of victims of every clean beast and bird. It was a burnt offering, the greatest the world had ever seen, and was intended to express his gratitude and devotion to Jehovah. This sacrifice pleased God and he determined that the earth should never see a like destruction (Gen. 8: 21, 22). He then made a new covenant with Noah (Gen. 9: 1-17). All

hings were made subject to him as they were to Adam t first. He was allowed to eat animal as well as vege- able food, was assured of the regularity of the seasons, nd was promised that there should never be "any more ood to destroy the earth" (Gen. 9: 11). The sacred- ess of life was indicated by announcing a death penalty or murder. The rainbow was made the pledge of all he promises. Its presence across a dark cloud would ssure men against the fears of a flood and would be a hemorial to remind God of his merciful covenant. Thus he race started anew, a saved group, rescued by the aith of Noah, and protected by the divine favor and lessing.

30. **The Flood in Tradition and Geology.** The flood eft a deep and enduring impression on the whole race nd has found a large place in the traditions and legends f each of the great races. As might be expected these raditions have been most accurate in the countries that were nearest to where the Ark rested. While there are many other such traditions, those of Babylon, Greece, China and America are the most important. In a gen- ral way these agree with the Biblical story in the fol- owing particulars: (1) That because of its wickedness he evil world was destroyed by a flood. (2) That one ighteous family was saved in a boat, and that animals were saved with them. (3) That the boat in which hey were saved landed on a mountain. (4) That a bird was sent out of the boat. (5) That the saved family mmediately upon leaving the boat, built an altar and worshiped God with a great sacrifice. All of these tories tend to corroborate the Biblical story and to how that the whole race must have sprung from this ommon home.

Much has also been done by geology to confirm the tory of the flood. Geologists are well acquainted with acts in the world's history that bring the flood "en- irely within the range of natural phenomena." The Scripture (Gen. 7: 11) speaks of the fountains of the deep being broken up, language which could easily re- er to the inrushing of the sea upon a depression of the arth which may have risen again later. Such eleva- ions and depressions have occurred many times in his-

tory. For instance, the coast of Greenland for six hundred miles has been gradually sinking for four hundred years; in 1882 an earthquake elevated the coast of Chile several feet for a long distance. It is remarkable that the land near Ararat where the Ark rested is a peculiarly depressed region that lies lower than the districts around it and makes it especially suited to such a submersion. Such an explanation in no way destroys the miraculous nature of the flood. The fact that it came just when Noah had completed the Ark and entered into it and just when God had said it would come provide all the qualities of a miracle. Another peculiar evidence of the flood is that all the great district lying east of Ararat bears certain traces of having been at one time under water. Then, too, a widespread flood is also required by the discovery of evidence in the earth of destruction of animal life.

31. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) Those derived from the story of Cain and Abel. (a) The mere fact of having worshiped is not a guarantee of acceptance with God. The worship must be of the right kind. (b) Both the spirit and the form of the worship must please God. (c) God points out the right way to men and only punishes when man fails to give heed. (d) God will turn to show man a better way, but he leaves him free and will not restrain him by force even from the worst of crimes. (e) To try to shun the responsibility of being our brother's keeper is to show the Cain spirit. (f) Sin increases amazingly when once given a place in our lives. (2) Those derived from the story of Cain and Seth. (a) That our acts reveal our thoughts. (b) That the indulgence of our lusts and appetites will degrade and disgrace the noblest of peoples. (c) That outward culture and civilization without true religion will not save a people from ruin. (d) That the noble and pure of the race will finally dominate in the world. (3) Those derived from the story of the flood. (a) That Jehovah cannot make men righteous against their will. Their freedom forbids it. (b) That men by their wickedness grieve God and thwart his will. (c) That man, therefore, has the power to cause his own destruction. (d) That God does not save because of civilization or

numbers, but because of character and obedience to his laws. (e) That God is pleased with the worship of those who obey him. (f) That God still regards man with genuine purposes of grace and good will.

32. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Different theories as to the extent of the flood. (2) Different theories as to the meaning of the flood. (3) The flood as a miraculous manifestation of judgment. (4) Different traditions of the flood and how they differ from the Bible narrative. (5) The spirit in which God acts against sin (Gen. 6: 6) and his delays in punishment (Gen. 6: 3). (6) Names and ages of the long-lived men between Adam and Noah. Which of them could have known both Adam and Noah so Noah could have known from Adam's friends all the stories of the fall, etc.? (7) The new covenant with Noah in comparison with all previous promises. (8) Signs and tokens of God's judgments or assurances—see mark of Cain. Find others.

SECTION III. FROM THE FLOOD TO ABRAHAM

(Gen. 9: 18—11: 32).

33. **Purpose of the Story.** The chief aim of these passages is to explain the origin of different languages and nationalities and to point out the place of Israel in the great family of nations. All the peoples and races are fundamentally one. Their origin is explained on two grounds—from the point of view of geography and also ethnologically. The nations least closely related to Israel are given first. This geneological table is of vast historical significance and so far as it extends, furnishes the central and continuous thread of ancient history. While saying nothing about the mission of Israel, it looks toward bringing all nations into the kingdom of God. At first she is one of the sisterhood of nations, and later, is selected to bear a special part in the history of redemption.

34. **Ararat and the Cradle of the Race.** Mount Ararat, where the Ark rested and where Noah and his sons

went forth to repeople the cleansed earth, probably lay just west of the garden of Eden. Thus, the second beginning of the race under Noah was in the same general territory as was the first beginning under Adam. This part of western Asia is, therefore, distinguished as the birth-place and cradle of the race.

Within four hundred miles of Haran, which is the center of this district, arose most of the great movements and peoples of the early times. The following list will be suggestive of what is embraced in this circle. (1) Eden and Ararat, where the race had its first and second start. (2) Babylon and Nineveh, the early seats of learning and science. (3) Mesopotamia, where God revealed himself to Abraham and called him to his great work. (4) Phoenicia, where arose a great and varied commerce and many of the arts of peace. (5) Palestine, the home of the chosen people, the birthplace of innumerable prophets and apostles and evangelists; and the scene of the birth, labors and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. (6) Tarsus, where Paul, the great apostle, was born and reared. (7) The most of Asia Minor where the apostles spent most of their labors.

35. **Man's New Career.** Man had already failed twice. Adam had failed to keep his innocence and had brought upon himself and all the race the penalty of death. Outside of the garden the race as a whole failed to measure up to the standard of what it knew to be right and brought upon itself the flood. But there is something inspiring about the new position of Noah. After the flood he and his family have a new start. They knew that the flood resulted from sin and that they were saved by divine grace and, therefore, knew God, both as one who punishes the impenitent wicked and saves those who believe. These experiences with sin and grace would deepen their fear of God, their sense of undeserved mercy and their conscious obligation to serve and worship him according to his will. This, together with the fact that all the evil people—thief, liar, adulterer, murderer and all who were unjust or unholy in any particular—were destroyed out of the world and only the righteous left, would lead us to hope

that they would succeed better than those before them and keep their righteousness. But alas! It is in man's nature to go astray from God, and soon there is sin everywhere and the nations are trying to thwart the purposes of God and his displeasure is resting upon them.

36. **Noah's Shame and Prophecy.** After the flood, perhaps compelled by the necessity for food, Noah became a husbandman, and, somewhere on the slopes or in the valleys of Ararat, planted a vineyard. On one occasion, at least, he fell under the intoxicating influence of the fermented wine which he had made. Here is a sad picture. This man upon whom God had conferred such great favor and who alone had preserved a seed of man on the earth now lay in his tent naked and helpless under the power of sin. While in this condition he was discovered by his sons, one of whom seemed to rejoice in his shame, while the others attempted to conceal his humiliation. Because of this Noah, in a spirit of prophecy, pronounced upon his sons and their descendants the punishment and rewards which their spirit and deeds merited. These prophecies were fulfilled in a remarkable way. (1) Out of Ham, who was to be a servile race, came, besides others, the early Babylonians, the Egyptians and Canaanites who developed the three great civilizations of antiquity. But their ascendancy soon passed and now for a long time Ham's descendants have been known as the black-skinned African and have occupied the place of weakness, degradation and servitude predicted of them. (2) Out of Shem came the Assyrians, the Syrians, the Semitic Chaldeans and the Elamites. The Bible record in chapter eleven drops all of his sons except Arphaxad from whom descended Abraham, Israel and Jesus. In harmony with Noah's prediction the descendants of Shem were long and signally blessed. This is seen in their long Asiatic supremacy and, especially, in the Hebrews who conquered the Canaanites (descendants of Ham) and in whose tents God dwelt and the Messiah who came through them. (3) Out of Japheth came the Scythians, Iberians, Thracians, Medes, Greeks, Romans and all the more modern races such as Britons, Russians and

Germans. They were little known during the ascendancy of the Shemites, but now they are the dominant race and for twenty-four hundred years have been the ruling people of the world. In harmony with Noah's prophecy they have spread themselves over the globe until continents are peopled by them and Japheth, as trader, colonist, or national power, rests his foot upon every soil of earth.

37. **Messianic Race.** It has already been indicated that the Jews as one of the Shemite races became the chosen or Messianic race. It is the purpose of the author of Genesis to make this race prominent. The genealogy in Gen. 11: 10-26, together with the discussion of Terah (11: 27-32), follows exactly the great genealogy of chapter 5. In that chapter we are given the line of Seth from Adam to Noah. In this, through Shem we continue that line from Noah to Abraham. Each table has ten names and has to do with the primary purpose of all Bible history which is to trace the rise and development of true religion. The development is along the line of men of faith who have received the promise of Jehovah. The promised Messiah, who was to bruise the serpent's head, is the star of hope who stands at the dim and distant end of the line, of whom Enoch and Noah and Abraham are thus far the outstanding figures, the last of whom also is to take prominent place in the next chapter.

38. **Tower of Babel.** (1) Its location was somewhere on the plain of Shinar, which was the name given by the early Hebrews to the land of Babylon (Gen. 10: 10; 14: 1; Isa. 11: 11; Dan. 1: 2; Zech. 5: 11), but the exact place cannot be determined with certainty. Many great mounds thrown up by these early people on the plain of Babylon are still to be seen by the traveler. The city of Babylon was long thought to be the place of the tower, but later two of these great mounds have been considered the location. (a) The Temple of Marduk. This is a great mound on the east side of the Euphrates. It has a huge pyramid-like foundation and represents a great temple. (b) Birs Nimrood. On the west side of the Euphrates there is a vast mound called Birs Nimrood that used to be regarded

as the ruins of this Biblical tower. The fact that it early gave the impression of incompleteness favors this claim. Nebuchadnezzar says on a tablet which has been discovered that another king began it and that it was completed by him and used as one of the great temples. It was built of brick, oblong in form and measured seven hundred yards around and rose to a height of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet. It consisted of seven stages or stories, colored to represent the tints which the Sabeans thought appropriate to the seven planets. Beginning at the bottom they were black, orange, bright red, golden, pale yellow, dark blue and silver, representing, respectively, the colors of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. These marks may indicate the prevalence of idolatry in that time, and have led some to think that the tower of Babel was intended to do honor to the gods of Babylon. None of this, however, can prove the identity of Babel. (2) Its purpose. Josephus says that their object was to save the people in case of another flood. This would have been a direct breach of faith, since God had covenanted that no other flood should come. From the Scripture record (11: 4) two purposes seem to have influenced them. (a) To make themselves a great name. They seem to have been moved by an unholy pride and by a selfish desire for renown. (b) To prevent dispersion. It seems also that they intended that it should become a sort of rallying point which would keep the people together and prevent the destruction of their glory which they thought would result from their separation. In 11: 6 God says "nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." God is plainly offended and indicates that they are at cross purposes with him. In some way it was an act that defied God and showed the need of punishment. It is not unlikely that idolatry had begun to prevail and that the tower was being built in honor of those false gods whom men were disposed to trust, and that Jehovah was thereby angered. (3) Its overthrow was accomplished by the divine wrath. Along with this came the confusion of tongues. The people could no longer speak the same language. Different

languages are here explained as a punishment of the race for rebellion against God. Sin brought many tongues and only redemption, indicated in Pentecost, can make them all one again.

39. **Traditions of the Tower.** Traditions of such a tower may be found in many countries and are not only interesting, but give emphasis to the facts of the story. Those found among two peoples will suffice to point out the general content of these traditions. (1) Chaldean tradition. In Babylon there was a tradition that not long after the flood men were tall and strong and became so puffed up that they defied the gods, and tried to erect a lofty tower which is now called Babylon, by means of which they could scale heaven. But when it reached the sky the gods sent a mighty wind and turned the tower over. This tradition also says that hitherto all men had used the same language, but that at this time there was sent upon them a confusion of many tongues, from which confusion the tower was called Babel. (2) Grecian tradition. In Greece there was a legend in which we trace the principles of the story of the tower of Babel. According to this legend a race of giants tried to reach Mount Olympus which was supposed to be the residence of the gods. They attempted to do this by piling Mount Ossa upon Pelion, but the gods interfered with their plans and scattered the impious conspirators. This effort of the Titans to mount up to the heavens corresponds so well to the motive of the builders of the tower as to indicate that the stories had a common origin.

40. **Two Great Empires of Antiquity.** Just when and where civilization began we have no means of tracing. That referred to in Gen. 4: 20-22 was swept away by the flood and we only have hints at the early beginnings of a new civilization in the story of the tower of Babel. But from the monuments and engraven vases that have been found in such unearthed cities as Nippur, we now know that in ages long before Abraham and Moses the world had made great advancement in culture, commerce, law and religion. Two nations, the Babylonians and Egyptians, both of which seem to have started very early in the history of the race and are the

most prominent of those early times should be studied. They seem to have made about equal progress in all the arts of civilization. (1) Chaldean or Babylonian Empire. Its founder is declared to have been Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, who was a great hunter and whose exploits as such seem to have won for him the throne. He began his reign at Babel, but had a number of other cities on the plain of Shinar. Later he went out into the district of Assyria and built Nineveh and a number of other cities. From Assyrian and Chaldean descriptions we have learned that they were well advanced in civilization. The solar year was divided into 365¼ days and eclipses were accurately predicted. Individual rights were as well protected in ancient Babylon as they are in Europe and America to-day. The family was recognized as the unit of organized society, the father being the head of the household and the mother highly honored, and her rights as wife or widow carefully protected by law. The king was commander-in-chief of the army, judge, chief priest, and protector of the people.

There are four well-defined divisions of their history. (a) A time of small city states from about 4500 B.C. to 3800 B.C. There were six important cities in the north and six in the south, each independent and controlling some adjacent territory. Non-Semitic people dominated the northern and Semitic people the southern group, and as rivals engaged in frequent and bitter wars. (b) A time of unification and expansion, from 3800 B.C. to about 2100 B.C. Under Sargon 1, King of Argade, who was of Semitic origin, all these cities which had common interests and institutions and religion were united into one nation. This was the first civilization that became a conquering force throughout the Semitic world. The early kings built many great temples, such as those to the Moon-god and to the Sun-god, and carried out great conquests that reached as far as Elam, Arabia and Aram. (c) A time of supremacy, from about 2100 B.C. to about 1700 B.C. The greatest king of this era was Hammurabi, whom some think to have been Amraphel (Gen. 14: 1-9). He delivered the people from the rule of the Elamite, who

had conquered Babylon about 2000 B.C. and established his capital at Babylon, the recognized center of the empire. He connected the Tigris and Euphrates by a canal, irrigated the Euphrates valley, and introduced improved methods of agriculture. He compiled and set up a remarkable code of laws by which justice was insured to his subjects, and became the real founder of the political, commercial and religious supremacy of Babylon. (d) A time of decline, from about 1700 B.C. to 538 B.C. Soon after the Kassites conquered Babylon, about 1700 B.C. Asher on the west side of the upper Tigris threw off the foreign yoke and laid the foundation of Assyria, which at once became the rival of Babylon, and in 1100 B.C. conquered it. From about 750 B.C. it again gained strength and in 625 B.C. conquered Nineveh, and between 606 and 586 B.C. led the Hebrews into captivity, and was the strongest empire in the east until Cyrus overthrew Belshazzar in 538 B.C. (2) The Egyptian empire. So far as the records of the Scripture or of the earliest of the monuments bear witness, Egypt comes before us full grown. The farther back we go the more perfect and developed do we find the organization of the country. The activity and industry of the Egyptians, their power of erecting great buildings and of executing other powerful feats of labor at this early period is the marvel of all ages. It has been shown by Prof. Petrie that some of the blocks of stone in at least one of the great pyramids were cut by the use of tubular drills fitted with diamond points, or with something similar. To us this is a very modern invention.

Their history falls easily into three divisions. (a) The Old Empire—from unknown antiquity to 2100 B.C. During this time Menes founded the first dynasty of rulers, and founded Memphis, the oldest capital; the fourth dynasty built the pyramids; and the twelfth dynasty removed the seat of power to Thebes in upper Egypt and inaugurated the most glorious era of this time. The kings and princes had a noble spirit of justice, and boasted of proper care for the poor and laboring classes. One of them boasted that "in my time there were no poor and none went hungry in my day,"

and again, "I never preferred the great to the small." (b) The middle, or Hyksos Empire,—from B.C. 2100 to B.C. 1650. Abraham seems to have migrated from Ur of the Chaldees during the early part of this era, and the Hebrews seem to have gone into Egypt during the latter part of it. (c) The new empire—from B.C. 1650 to B.C. 525. This began with the eighteenth dynasty and continued through at least thirty dynasties. The rulers of the second period were Semitic shepherds from the north and, as kindred people, were kind to Abraham, Joseph and Jacob. But the kings of the new empire would mistrust the Hebrews because they were related to the kings they had just overthrown. This led to the oppression of the Hebrews to be discussed later.

41. **Commerce of Those Times.** During these times commerce was carried on extensively on both land and sea. More than two thousand years before Moses, sculptors, brick-layers, smiths, carpenters, masons, miners, leather workers, potters and jewelers were to be found and most of the trades were organized into guilds or unions. There were great merchants and bankers that loaned money at a high rate of interest. There were fixed standards of value, coinage of money, and laws to protect business interests. There was an almost constant stream of caravans between Egypt and Babylon. These passed through Canaan and made it a place of trade, and alert with world interests. Treaties were made between the different states whereby these caravans were protected and given safe passage through the countries traversed. Three thousand years before Christ the Phoenicians sent out ships from their ancient city of Tyre and had intercourse with England. They also sailed around Africa and traded on the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Egypt sent expeditions to south Africa in the sixteenth century before Christ. All of this suggests how much more of geography the ancients knew than we are accustomed to think. It shows, also, their ability to organize and carry forward great and far reaching commercial enterprises.

42. **Their Language and Literature.** We know nothing of the origin of language, but modern research

strangely confirms the Biblical idea that all men once spoke the same language and that the varieties of human tongues arose from some remarkable cause. The Bible alone states what that cause was. It is of interest that existing languages belong to three great families of languages; the Aryan, the Semitic and the Turanian, and that these correspond roughly to the three sons of Noah,—Shem, Ham and Japheth.

It should also be said that we know nothing of the origin of writing, but as far back as we can go into their history we find already developed a most complex system of writing, and many large libraries, both in the royal cities and in the small towns. In the time of Abraham and long before there was great literary culture, letters passed between kingdoms and cities and written contracts and treaties were signed. There were schools and colleges, great dictionaries and many books on many subjects. The Babylonian language was almost universally employed. A scribe could, therefore, read without difficulty a letter sent anywhere in Egypt, Babylon, Canaan or Arabia. This unity is valuable now in that it makes the translation of inscriptions on the monuments comparatively easy.

43. **Religious Motive of Their Civilization.** One can hardly escape the inquiry, "What prompted their civilization?" or "Why were such mighty empires founded and such temples and cities built?" The reason is not difficult to find. The old Babylonian kings were called Priest Kings, and built their empires, temples and cities, and exhibited all their wonderful skill from a religious motive. Everything in social and political life, and even in trade and manufacture and war, was prompted by religion. The great mounds on the plain of Shinar and the pyramids of Egypt, all had a religious purpose and are the eternal monuments of the religious devotion of these ancient people. Their religion was, however, filled with all sorts of idolatrous abuses, and God called Abraham to inaugurate a pure religious life and to be the father of a people from whom would come the Great Revealer of all religious truth.

44. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) All the races had a common origin and therefore are vitally related. (2)

By tracing the origin of the different races, we are shown the place of Israel in the family of nations. (3) Since all nations are but branches of the same great family, all men are brothers. (4) The Hebrews are deeply interested in all of their neighbors, and their unique history can only be understood in their true relation as a part of the ancient Semitic world. (5) God exercises a common rule over all nations. (6) Civilization at this early time had reached a great advancement. (7) Men had reached a state of great wickedness and even defiance against God. The division of mankind into nations and the different languages are factors in the divine plan for the progress of mankind.

45. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Genealogy of Noah's sons. (2) Different places where his descendants settled, the cities they built and the names of those connected with each. Study the geography. (3) Through which of the sons of Noah the Messiah came and through which of that son's sons. (4) Lessons from the sin and shame of Noah and the spirit of his sons. (5) Nature and fulfillment of his prophecies concerning his sons. (6) Universality of the race and the origin of the nations. (7) Teachings of the tower of Babel. (8) Origin of the different languages and the relation of languages to the creation and maintenance of separate nations. (9) Traditions of other peoples that correspond to the stories of this section. (10) Evidence of ancient monuments that corroborate or throw light upon, the meaning of this section of Scripture. (11) Civilization of that early time compared with that of our time.

SECTION IV. RELIGION DURING THE ENTIRE PERIOD

It is our plan to gather up at the end of each period the general religious truths which it has conveyed. Already some of the ideas and purposes of religion in the three sections of this period have been pointed out. But here it is proposed to sum up the impression that has been conveyed by the whole period. We have met

all the great ideas, if not all the great words, that have to do with religion. The nature and character of God and man, the two persons directly interested in all religious considerations, have been indicated. There has also been given an intelligent view of sin and righteousness, two fundamental words in any study in the field of religion. Along with these are found many other matters of importance, such as judgment and deliverance, reward and punishment, and sacrifice and covenants. The following considerations will show something of the fullness of religious thought found here.

46. **God's Names.** Hebrew names, even the names of God, had special significance and several things may be learned concerning God from the names given him in this section. (1) God. This name comes from one word and two of its compounds and from it we are taught: (a) That he is a great strong being having all power. (b) That as such we are dependent upon him and that he is, therefore, to be worshiped by us. (c) That he is true and faithful and consequently is to be trusted and obeyed. (d) That he is one God, yet plural in person. Everywhere he seems to be acting alone as sole authority, and yet in 1: 26, 27 he speaks in the plural: "Let us make man," and "God (plural) created man in his own image." And since the Hebrew plural means three or more, we have the suggestion of the Trinity. (2) Jehovah God. This name Jehovah, which is translated LORD, and printed with small capitals in the old version, means: (a) That God is a self-existing being who reveals himself. (b) That he is a Redeemer and seeks fallen sinners as he did Adam after the fall. (c) That he makes and keeps with men covenants of mercy. Here again is his worthiness of our trust and worship and obedience, but also his rightful place as an object of our love.

47. **God's Actions and Sayings.** A study of God's acts and sayings recorded here are such as to greatly impress us. (1) The fact of creation. The narrative teaches emphatically that all things were at the beginning formed by one eternal God. (a) This teaching gives us a very awe-inspiring conception of the power

and glory of God. As the one all-sufficient Creator it puts him on a height infinitely above every other being and suggests our dependence upon him, our responsibility to him and our duty of submitting to his authority and to live for his glory. (b) The system with which he is described as arranging the universe gives us the conception that disorder and chaos are out of harmony with the nature of deity. (c) He continues his interest in the world. Certain it is that he continued his work until the organization was complete. Moreover, when man sinned he at once interested himself in shaping the results that should follow. He even cursed the earth for man's sake and, thereby, showed that he is still in control in his universe. He then is seen as the God of providence. (2) His relations to man. In his relations to men we may learn of God: (a) That he claims the right to direct man's actions. Men may not disobey him without suffering his displeasure and consequent punishment. (b) That he is kindly disposed to men. This is seen in the original provision for him in the garden of Eden, in visiting him after the fall, and in making provisions for his comfort, and promising the destruction of the serpent, his enemy, after the fall. (c) That he is a God of holiness. The attitude in connection with the fall marks him as a God of holiness and of hatred toward sin, as well as a Redeemer from sin.

48. **God as Personal Creator.** Taken as a whole this story gives us a sublime conception of the dignity and majesty of God as one who, from the beginning, has exercised over all men and nations a kind and helpful, and yet omnipotent, rule. But he is a Counselor, and a Deliverer—a God not only to be feared but to be loved. Special emphasis attaches to his personality. He is not just an influence, but a Person exercising influence. He is an intelligent being, taking counsel with himself and having converse with others. He declares purposes and plans and then engages his energies in their accomplishment. He is not a part of nature or dependent upon it and the state which it assumes, but is apart from and over all nature to control its destinies and to shape its uses. Such a worthy view of the supremacy,

unity, spirituality and personality of God as stated here, and that in an age of grossest superstitions, cannot be explained except on the basis of the inspiration of the writer.

49. **Precluded Theories.** These views of God and of his creative and directive work in nature set at naught certain purely human theories. (1) They reject Atheism by assuming the existence of God and by teaching that he may be known of men. (2) They deny polytheism in that they proclaim one eternal God who originated all things and controlled their development. They also reject the polytheistic doctrine of two eternal principles—one good and one evil. (3) They preclude materialism. This they do by asserting the creation of matter, thereby denying that matter is eternal and that an active principle of its own brought to pass its present state. (4) They deny pantheism because they assume the existence of God before and separate from all things, while pantheism denies both his priority and independent existence. (5) They contradict fatalism, in that they imply the freedom of the eternal Being and that he has power to begin a new course of action and to direct all movements toward purposeful ends.

50. **Position and Nature of Man.** In any study of religion we must consider man. In these narratives he is given a very prominent place and we have learned concerning him several fundamental things. (1) That he has a unique relation to God, being especially created in his likeness and, therefore, suited for the divine fellowship and communion. (2) That he is consequently under obligation to love and obey God who has thus honored him. (3) That he has a place of supremacy in the world. All things, both physical and animal, were made to be used for the promotion of his growth and happiness and were put in subjection to him. (4) That he is a social being. All men are made to have relation with other men and cannot be their best apart. Here are implied all the social privileges and obligations. (5) That marriage and the home are inherent both in his nature and in the purpose of God, and are the primal divine institutions for the purity and prosperity of the race. (6) That he is a religious being and must wor-

ship, if he is to be happy and contented. (7) That he is free to act and responsible to God for his acts. God will suggest and warn and even persuade, but will finally leave man to choose for himself. (8) That his wilfulness led him to disobey God and he is now under the penalty of sin and death. (9) That he may be redeemed by the mercy of God. These and related truths furnish the basis for all the Bible teaching about man.

51. **Nature of Sin.** If we attempt to analyze the nature of sin as seen in these chapters the following elements, or manifestations of it, seem outstanding. (1) It had its roots in unbelief. This is clearly brought out in the story of the temptation. (2) It is prompted by selfishness. Eve wanted for herself the satisfying food and the increase of knowledge and wisdom that would come from eating the forbidden fruit. The descendants of Seth desired to satisfy their own pleasure and lust and so married the daughters of Cain. The descendants of Noah wanted to have their way about being scattered over the earth. (3) There was a manifestation of disobedience and even of defiance to God. (a) The disobedience is seen in the act of Adam in taking the forbidden fruit, and in the act of the descendants of Noah in refusing to disperse according to the divine will. In one case it was the wilful doing of what God forbade, and in the other it was a determined refusal to do what God had commanded. (b) The defiance may be seen in this very refusal to obey. But it is more clearly manifested in the building of the tower by which they proposed to have their way in spite of the divine command. (4) Other manifestations of their sin, such as murder and violence, have already been discussed.

52. **False Worship.** Nobody seemed to throw away all religion. They could not rid themselves of the natural religious sentiment, nor of their sense of dependence upon a higher power. They had a sense of guilt that needed forgiveness, and a prospect of death and judgment that led them to worship, but they tended to worship falsely. Everywhere they forsook the pure worship of the true God and changed the objects and forms of true worship. Then, as now, the impure heart

of man seems to recoil from the perfect purity of God and shrinks from dealing directly with him. This led them to try to worship him through his works such as the sun and moon and stars. This was easily followed by the making of images to represent the attributes of God and the worshiping of him through them. Thus idolatry and superstition, such as magical charms, soon gained sway among these early people. Egypt and Chaldea had a great many such gods and by the end of this period their worship had become so corrupt that God must needs, choose out a man and a country that he might preserve religion from these false and idolatrous tendencies and save the race from the pollution and degradation to which such worship tended.

53. **True Worship.** (1) There was true worship. The fact that there was true worship is clearly indicated in the story. Abel was accepted as a worshiper and praised for it in the New Testament. After the birth of Seth man again began to worship Jehovah—evidently in an acceptable manner. Enoch worshiped and so directly related himself to God that he was said to have walked with God and that he pleased God and was taken to be with him. Before the flood Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He found favor in God's sight and walked with him. After the flood he set up an altar and so worshiped that God was pleased and came down and made a new covenant with him. It is gratifying thus to know that some men truly worshiped —that they had evidently learned the way of salvation and that some were saved. (2) Features and usages of this worship. It was clearly based upon the relation between God and man, man being a sinner and God being holy and offended because of man's sin and also able to help him. Several elements or features are of interest. (a) It involved the offering of sacrifices. This is seen in the case of Cain and Abel and also in the great offering of Noah after the flood. In the study of both the acceptable offerings, those of Abel and Noah—we find that they consisted of animal sacrifices. (b) Noah's sacrifice is called a burnt offering. In this we detect an element of worship that is well advanced. It regarded the worshiper as already reconciled to God and

expressed his consecration to him. This is very suggestive, following as it does his deliverance from the flood. (c) There is also the origin of the altar. Noah erected an altar on which to make his sacrifice. The underlying idea of the altar is that of a meeting place between God and man. Here men brought their gifts to God. In the New Testament we learn that the altar was used to prefigure the cross on which Jesus died. It was made much of later. (d) Another element of their worship was the distinction between the clean and unclean beasts or birds which they offered in sacrifice. This again shows that Noah understood something of a purity or holiness in worship, so much emphasized in the time of Moses. (e) It is also clearly seen that Jehovah accepts the worship and blesses the worshiper, and also that he rejects all those who do not thus worship him. (f) There is here also the idea of covenants of worship. God made promises both as an inducement to true worship and as a recognition of it.

Taken as a whole, then, we have gained a knowledge of all the root ideas of both true and false religion. We have seen something of the spiritual condition of the worshiper and of the offering he shall make. We have learned much concerning God who is worshiped and his attitude toward the worshiper, whether true or false. We should carry forward with us some sense of the fearful consequences of wrong religion.

THEME QUESTION

From a study of the whole period the following are topics suitable for themes. (1) The idea of God which these stories give. (2) Man's place in the universe. (3) What is revealed as man's greatest need and what his highest achievement? (4) What is God's plan in the world?

CHAPTER II

THE HEBREW FAMILY

(Gen. 12-50)

From the Call of Abraham to the Descent into Egypt

INTRODUCTORY

54. **Events of the Period.** The events of the entire period are as follows. (1) Abraham's call and settlement in Canaan. Chaps. 12-13. (2) The rescue of Lot from the plundering kings of the north, Chap. 14. (3) God makes a covenant with Abraham, Chap. 15. (4) The birth and disposal of Ishmael, Chap. 16. (5) The promise of Isaac, Chap. 17. (6) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Chaps. 18, 19. (7) Abraham lives at Gerar and Isaac is born and sacrificed. Chaps. 20-22. (8) Sarah's death, Chap. 23. (9) Isaac's marriage, Chap. 24. (10) Abraham and Ishmael die and Isaac's two sons are born, Chap. 25. (11) Isaac dwells in Gerar and Jacob buys his brother's birthright and steals his blessing, Chaps. 26, 27. (12) Jacob's experiences as a fugitive and his return and settlement in Canaan, Chaps. 28-36. (13) Joseph's career and the settlement of the nation in Egypt, Chaps. 37-50.

55. **Condition of the Times.** (1) Outward. Outwardly there was a splendid civilization with great cities and temples and libraries. "There were workers in fabrics, metals, stones, implements and ornaments." Time was divided as it is now, and sun-dials showed the time of day. Great systems of canals existed and the land was in a high state of cultivation. The pyramids were already old and a great stone wall had been built across the Isthmus of Suez to prevent immigrants and

enemies from coming down from the north. In Tyre and Sidon there were great glass works and dye factories. There were vast harbors crowded with sea-going ships and luxurious living was found everywhere. (2) Inward. In the midst of this prosperity there existed an inward moral corruption which was hastening the nations to decay and to a ruin such as still amazes all the world. Ur of the Chaldees, the birth-place and home of Abraham, was the seat of the great temple of the moon-god, and this sanctuary became so famous that the moon-god became known throughout all northern Syria as the Baal or Lord of Haran. The bad state of the times is suggested by the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were probably typical of the entire civilization of the time.

56. **Hebrew Civilization.** (1) Patriarchal government. Among the Hebrews, and probably among other people of the time, the father held a place of supreme importance and power. (a) He was the ruler of the family. This power was so complete that while a father lived he controled the place of abode and all the affairs of all his children even after they were married and had their own families. All of their plans were made by him and it seems that he even had the power of life and death in his hands. (b) He was the military leader. Whenever trouble arose among the clans the father armed his sons and servants and led them to battle. Abraham led such an expedition against the Mesopotamians to rescue Lot. (c) He was the family priest. It was thought that no one could worship except through a priest, but a regular line of priests had not been chosen. The father of the household, therefore, erected the altars and made the family sacrifices and led their worship. (d) He was the family prophet. To him God made known his will and purpose, and through him they were made known to all the family. In civil and social life he was, therefore, absolute monarch. In matters of religion he was the family's representative to God and God's representative to it. (2) Nomadic habits and civilization. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob founded no cities, but lived in tents and moved from place to place. But they were not aimless

or lawless or barbarian. They touched the greatest civilizations of their times. They had money and jewelry and signet rings, and Joseph wore the colored tunic of a prince. They were shepherds and agriculturists and knew much of the arts of war. They manifested many civil customs, among them the very finest courtesy. They had no settled home, but had one in prospect, and were migrating at the call of God. There was no marauding or plundering. They both regarded the rights of others and showed themselves to be righteous. Never were there other nomads like them, who were of genuine help to all whom they touched.

57. **Purpose of the Narrative.** Out of such a time and civilization God called Abraham and made him the instrument of founding a new nation and a new civilization that would serve God. He had covenanted not again to destroy the world with a flood, and now that truth and purity may be preserved he chose Abraham and deposited with him and his descendants his truth and the hopes of the race till the coming of Jesus. He selected as their home the land of Canaan which was the geographical center of the ancient world. A revelation of God made there would soon be known among all nations.

The narrative now changes from the consideration of the general history of the race to the study of one man and the family and nation that descended from him. Hitherto the interest has centered in events rather than in men. The Biblical narrator passed from peak to peak of momentous events with gigantic strides that span many centuries. But now the stream of history narrows down to a single race, the Hebrews, and grows continually fuller to the end. Here we find God dealing with each family through the father or head of it, who is both priest and ruler of the house, and hence we call this a period of patriarchal administration.

SECTION I. ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

(Gen. 12-26)

58. **Relation of the Stories of Abraham and Isaac.** So intimately related are the lives, and especially cer-

tain outstanding events of the lives, of Abraham and Isaac that it seems impossible to separate them in discussion. Certainly each has his own personality and each makes his own distinct contribution to the outcome of the stories. Some matters concerning each will, therefore, be discussed separately, while the discussion of some matters will involve them jointly.

59. **Abraham's Names and Early Life.** The name Abram, by which he was originally designated, means "high father," or "father of elevation." This may have indicated the conception of him which his parents held, or the esteem and reverence in which he was held by the people in general. As a token of special divine approval God subsequently changed his name to Abraham which means "father of a multitude." His father was named Terah and he had two brothers, Nahor and Haran. Haran died, leaving a son named Lot, whose life was later connected very closely with that of Abraham. He was born in Ur of the Chaldeans, only a short distance below Babylon. It was also at Ur that he secured his beloved wife, Sarah, and that he received the call and promise of God (Acts 7: 2-4). He was a wealthy shepherd and, with his father and family, started to Canaan.

60. **Abraham's Call and the Divine Covenant.** The call of Abraham was the most important religious event since the fall of man and was, in fact, a new starting point for genuine religion. It was accompanied by a promise, or covenant, that was wholly based upon the faithfulness of God and guaranteed that Abraham should be a blessing to all nations. The call and work involved, together with the promises, may be put down somewhat as follows: (1) It was a call to separation from kindred and native land. He was a shepherd-farmer with large flocks and herds and with a number of slaves. The family was no doubt one of high rank in his country, and certainly there was in his family a warm family affection. He did not migrate to the regions of the Mediterranean for the sake of gain, but in obedience to divine call, and for conscience' sake, somewhat as the Pilgrim Fathers, forsaking the ties of nature that bound them to England, sailed to America in

the Mayflower. (2) It was a call to service. The people of his time were rapidly falling into idolatry. Even Terah, his father, was an idolater and reputed to have been a maker of images. Abraham was called to serve the true and living God and to stand for him where all social and national customs were against him. (3) It was a call to found a nation. God promised to make of him a great nation that should have as its main purpose the service of the one God. Ruin was about to come to all the nations of Abraham's time and God had prepared him, and in him a spiritual nation that should outlast Egypt and Babylon. (4) It was a call to be the father of a son. In Gen. 17: 16 God promised him a son, Isaac, in whom his seed should be called (Gen. 21: 12) and out of whom was to come the blessing of all nations. This was the promise of Christ, through whom all the nations of the earth have been blessed. Just as in Isaac, Abraham became the head of a great earthly seed that should be as the sand of the sea for number, so in Jesus, he should be the head of a great spiritual seed that should be in number as the very stars of the heaven.

This covenant contained four promises. (1) A great nation; fulfilled in the Hebrew people. (2) A great name; fulfilled in that Hebrews and Christians and Mohammedans all call him their great religious father. (3) A land; fulfilled in the possession of Canaan by the Hebrews. (4) A blessing to all nations. This, through the preaching of the gospel, is still in the process of fulfillment. God often repeated his promise and covenant to Abraham, Gen. 12: 1-7; 13: 14-17; 15: 1-21; 17: 1-8; 18: 18; 22: 16-18. He also frequently renewed it in generations to come as to Isaac, Gen. 26: 1-5 and to Jacob, Gen. 28: 10-15.

61. **Abraham's Wanderings.** By faith Abraham proved himself worthy of founding a race suited to the purposes of God. When he was called he "went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11: 8) and lived a life of migrations. (1) He moved from Ur to Haran where his father died. (2) He moved on toward the promised land (12: 5-9) and soon came to Shechem, where Jehovah appeared to him, and he built an altar

of worship. (3) He moved on to Bethel and there built an altar and received a renewal of the divine covenant. (4) A famine in Canaan led him to go to Egypt for food (12: 10-20). There he committed a great sin in pretending that Sarah was only his sister, and through this his wife was humiliated in being taken as a wife unto Pharaoh. (5) On leaving Egypt Abraham again settled in Bethel, where trouble arose between his herdsmen and the herdsmen of Lot. He and Lot separated and God came again to Abraham and renewed his covenant (Ch. 13). Abraham erected here an altar and worshiped God and, thereafter, made his permanent abode at Hebron.

62. **Abraham's Life at Hebron.** During the years of his life at Hebron many important events transpired. (1) He rescued Lot from the Chaldeans, who sacked Sodom and Gomorrah and carried him away captive, Chap. 14. (2) God renewed with him the covenant of blessing, Chap. 15, and instructed him to make an offering whereupon he received wonderful divine revelations. (3) His marriage to Hagar and the birth of Ishmael, Chap. 16. This was a blunder that caused trouble in his family, and resulted in a hostile race that was ever a hindrance to the divine plans. (4) Abraham's and Sarah's names are changed, and circumcision instituted, Chap. 17. God changed both of their names to comport with their new position, and gave them circumcision as a perpetual ordinance for the covenant people. (5) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Chaps. 18-19. Because of Abraham God delivered Lot from this destruction, but because of his sin Lot became the father of Moab and Ammon who were a great hindrance to Israel. (6) His lapse at Gerar (Ch. 20). After the destruction of Sodom Abraham moved to Gerar where he again practiced deception with reference to his wife who, however, was saved from humiliation by divine intervention.

63. **Isaac's Birth and Name.** After twenty years of wandering and of waiting for the promised son, and when Abraham was one hundred and Sarah ninety years old, Isaac was born. Their great age made his birth impossible in nature and, therefore, miraculous. His

birth was the occasion of such great rejoicing that he was named "Isaac," which means "laughter." When he was eight days old he was circumcised, and when he was weaned the occasion was celebrated with a great feast. Being the son of Sarah he was Abraham's only legitimate son, and because Ishmael showed a bad spirit toward him, Sarah demanded that he and Hagar, his mother, be sent away. Jehovah approved her demand and Ishmael was cast out, but he grew into a great people, represented especially by the Arabians that were always the enemies of Israel.

64. **Isaac Offered in Sacrifice** (Chap. 22). Abraham's faith was given its severest test by Jehovah's command that he go to Mount Moriah and offer Isaac as a burnt offering to him. It had triumphed over the love of kindred, and had waited twenty years for the promised son. Could it triumph over the love of offspring, especially when it seemed to destroy the prospect of all the other blessings which God had promised? His faith stood the test (Heb. 11: 17-19), Isaac was spared, and God renewed his covenant of mercy with him.

There was at that time a deep-rooted belief that the sacrifice of children and relatives was especially acceptable to deity. References to such sacrifices may be found in 2 Kg. 17: 31; 2 Kg. 3: 27; Lev. 18: 21; 20: 2; 2 Kg. 21: 6; 23: 10; Jer. 7: 31; 19: 5. But there is here no evidence that such sacrifices were common among the Hebrews. Indeed, the fact that it was made the means of test indicates that it was not used among them, or it would not have been a test.

65. **Isaac's Marriage.** This is the beginning of his career, or leadership, and looks to the blessing of all nations through him. The story is all found in one chapter and may be divided into the following five sections: (1) Abraham instructs his servant to secure a bride for Isaac (24: 1-9). He made him take an oath and bound him. (a) To secure her from among his kin. (b) To bring her to Canaan and not carry Isaac away from Canaan. (2) Eliezer starts for Mesopotamia (24: 10-14). After receiving instructions, Abraham's servant got together some camels, and other servants, also certain tokens of the wealth and sincer-

ity of Abraham. He went to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia and decided upon a plan by which he could determine the will of God in the matter. (3) He meets Rebekah (24: 15-28). At the well when he saw that she met the requirements he gave her some tokens of appreciation, inquired of her people and was invited to her home. (4) He met Bethuel and Laban (24: 29-61). When he arrived at her home he explained the charge of Abraham and how he had come to meet Rebekah, and there sought and secured her consent and theirs for her to go with him and become the wife of Isaac. (5) Rebekah is carried to Isaac (24: 62-67). In harmony with their agreement she was carried by this servant to Canaan and became the wife of Isaac. In all this Abraham shows an intense desire to preserve the purity of the family and of his religious faith and worship.

66. **Isaac's Life After his Marriage.** The rest of the life of Isaac is not discussed at any very great length. Not many incidents are recorded of him. The following should be mentioned. (1) Birth of his sons, Esau and Jacob (Gen. 25: 24-26) when he was sixty years old. (2) Renewal to him of the Abrahamic covenant (26: 1-5). On account of a famine he went down to Gerar and there God confirmed to him the covenant that had been given Abraham. (3) Experiences with Abimelech, King of Gerar (26: 6-33). (a) He deceived Abimelech about his wife, as Abraham before him had done, and on account of it he was asked to leave Gerar. (b) He went out from Abimelech and opened up wells and, thereby, created strife between his herdsmen and those of Gerar. After this God came to him and again renewed his covenant with him. (c) Later Abimelech saw the blessing of God upon him, frankly confessed it, and made a covenant with him. (4) Jacob's deception in securing the birthright (27: 1-33) which will be discussed in the next study. (5) Esau's marriage of two Hittites (26: 34-35) which very much displeased Isaac and Rebekah. (6) His death and burial at the age of 180 (35: 27-29).

67. **The Character of Abraham.** How great a man is Abraham! Even to-day he is revered and counted spir-

itual father by Jews and Mohammedans and Christians alike. There is not in all history a nobler figure, and one marvels that such a time as that could have produced such a life. Three things are important. (1) His qualities of manhood. His wealth indicated a keen business insight. His quiet self-control when he separated from Lot marks him as a man of good temper. His dealing with Lot, his success in rescuing him and his care in seeking Isaac a wife, all mark him as a man of rare wisdom. His tender relation to his wife. his kindness to Lot and his care of Isaac portray a warm family affection. By refusing to claim his full rights when Lot made his choice, and by sacrificing his interests and endangerng his life for others he showed unusual generosity—rare magnanimity. In serving the divine guests who visited his tent he exhibited the finest type of hospitality to strangers. In all there was religion. What words these that describe him—business ability, good temper, wisdom, family affection, generosity, magnanimity, hospitality and true religion. (2) His religion. Here is the chief element of his greatness. He had a faith that could stand any test. He had frequent communion with God, always erecting an altar of worship wherever he went. He stood ready and even desirous at all times to please and obey God. In everything he manifested reverence, confidence, love and submission to him. Thus he made the service and worship of God first in all his plans, and as a consequence, he and his seed have influenced the destinies of the world forever. (3) His forward look. He did not build his life for the present but for the future. He linked his destinies with the far off fulfilment of God's promises. He trusted that his race would finally occupy Canaan, and so, buried Sarah and arranged to be buried there himself. Along with the promised land he expected the coming of the promised seed, and by faith rejoiced in the day of Christ (John 8: 56). This is his supreme religious contribution. He trusted to the future for something better. Lives are always great or small according as they are built around the present or the future, he lived for the future, and hence lives on in the future.

68. **The Character of Isaac.** The story of Isaac is very short and contains little of special interest. It has nothing like the importance of the lives of Abraham and Jacob, and what events of his life are important belong more to the lives of Abraham and Jacob than to his own. He lived in a quiet home at, or near, Hebron and manifested a retiring and peace-loving disposition, but did not display such energy and force of character or such daring of faith as did Abraham, his father. But he was pious and had all of Abraham's reverence for God, and showed an abiding faith in him. He is an example of the average man of any race or age who follows the line of least resistance. He loved his wife very dearly, and yet, through cowardly deception, subjected her to the most serious calamity. Nowhere in his whole life did he merit any special praise, even the renewal of the promises not being on his own behalf. And yet, as the son of promise, and for the sake of Abraham, he was given an honored place among the patriarchs, and was blessed with repeated renewals of the promises already made to Abraham. Aside from the matters already discussed, only the birth of his sons, Esau and Jacob, and Jacob's deception of him with its consequences are important, and these will be discussed in connection with Jacob.

69. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) God leads to a noble destiny all those who will be led by him. (2) God never fails to reveal himself to those who are in the path of duty—no matter in what land they serve. (3) God's care and control reaches to all others, as well as to Israel. (4) Unselfishness in service will always be rewarded by God. (5) Those who receive and kindly treat strangers often have the privilege of having the noblest of God's messengers in their homes. (6) It always pays to be right with God. (7) God sometimes blesses one man because another has gone before him and lived for God—Isaac. (8) Children, though having a better opportunity than their father, do not always measure up to him—Isaac.

70. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The several appearances of God to Abraham. (a) Purpose and circumstances of each. (b) Promises made in connec-

tion with each. (c) Influence of each on Abraham's life. (2) Care taken in explaining the age of Abraham and Sarah at different times. Why? (3) The geography of the countries where Abraham was born and where he visited. (4) Describe the two deliverances of Lot by Abraham. (5) Tell the story of the sacrifice of Isaac—references to it in the New Testament and its teachings illustrative of Christ. (6) Lessons of the marriage of Isaac—compare it as a type to the process of securing the church as the bride of Christ. (7) Abraham in the New Testament. (8) Difference in children from the same parents, Esau and Jacob. (9) The childlike faith of the servant who sought Isaac a wife. (10) Very ordinary men chosen as instruments of God's purpose.

SECTION II. JACOB WHO BECAME ISRAEL

(Gen. 27-38)

71. **Jacob's Birth and Names.** Jacob was a twin brother of Esau, but we do not know the date of his birth. During his life he had two names. (1) Jacob, which was given him from the mere incident of his having had hold of the heel of Esau when he was born. It means "heel-catcher," one who trips another, and is commonly translated "supplanter." He would trip Esau and supplant him, taking the place generally occupied by the older and, hence, it was said of him at his birth, "The elder shall serve the younger." (2) Israel. After a night of experience with God at Peniel where he was both defeated and victorious, the Lord named him Israel. From this name his descendants are called Israelites. His life easily falls into two divisions according to the life he lived under each name. For our purpose, however, it seems better to make no such division, but to discuss certain topics instead.

72. **Jacob Purchased Esau's Birthright.** Jacob and Esau grew to manhood with very different dispositions. Esau was a cunning hunter and delighted in the chase, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents, and a

gardener. The first was the favorite of his father and the second of his mother. On one occasion while Jacob was cooking pottage, Esau came in from the chase, tired and hungry, and asked Jacob for a portion of his pottage. Seeing a chance to secure the advantage of his famished brother, he meanly extorted from him an oath by which he sold to him the advantages of the parental birthright, which gave him the headship of the family and a double portion of the inheritance (Dt. 21 : 15-17). True, one who would sell such an advantage for momentary gratification is not fitted to found a nation or to promulgate a sublime and holy religion; but Jacob, though bright and ambitious, and though highly prizing the birthright and covenant blessing, was not justified in taking advantage of his brother's weakness. Neither of them appears very worthy of honor so far as this story reveals, and their relation made dark all the latter days of Isaac.

73. **Base Deception of His Father.** Considerable time elapsed after the purchase of the birthright, and the age of Isaac admonished him that the time had come for the bestowal of the coveted blessing and, although he knew that at his birth God indicated that Jacob should have it, Isaac determined to bestow it upon Esau. But Rebekah was awake to the situation and proposed to Jacob a fraud by which he could secure it. He consented to his mother's scheme and, by taking advantage of his father's blindness, secured the parental blessing. Here again he showed himself a supplanter, his mother also aiding him. After the birthright had been pronounced upon him Esau came and Isaac realized the deception, but having spoken in a prophetic strain, felt that he could not revoke his words. Esau wept and declared that Jacob, true to his name, had twice supplanted him, and determined vengeance upon him.

74. **Flight from Home.** The results of his sins began at once to manifest themselves. He and his mother were both guilty and both must suffer. The spirit of vengeance and murder aroused in Esau endangered Jacob's life and made it necessary for him to leave the father he deceived, the brother he defrauded and the fond mother who aided him in his sin. At one stroke

he was deprived of all that he held dear, and his devoted mother was compelled to send away her favorite son, never to see his face again. Because she feared for his life, but on a pretense of fearing lest he should marry a daughter of Heth, his mother induced Isaac to send him away to seek a wife from among his kin at Haran. It was a sad flight. Behind him were all the memories of childhood, all the baseness of his own evil deeds, and the grim specter of Esau's vengeance; before him, God alone knew what. Little comfort did he find in the fact that he had received the covenant blessing and that on his departure his father had wished for him the covenant blessing of Abraham. He was a conscious transgressor and his thoughts would most certainly rest on his unhappy circumstances.

75. **Experience at Bethel.** On his journey toward Haran night came on and Jacob lay down beneath the stars of heaven to sleep, having a stone for his pillow. His thoughts of the day no doubt influenced his dreams that night, and he had a vision of great religious significance. In it he was assured that God had not utterly forsaken him, but was taking a keen interest in him. Moreover, he revealed himself as the God of Abraham and Isaac and renewed the covenant to this fleeing sinner, assuring him of his protecting presence and blessing. Here he worshiped God and made suitable vows to him. This religious experience made a profound impression upon Jacob, the place became very sacred to him and, in order to keep it so, he set up a memorial and called the name of the place Bethel, which means "house of God." Whenever after that he or his descendants came to Bethel they worshiped God there.

76. **His Family.** Jacob arrived at Haran and spent twenty years there amid the scenes of the services of his grandfather, Abraham. The scene at the well when he arrived, in which he kissed Rachel, and the conduct of Laban when he learned of him was such as often occurs in Arabia to-day. Jacob's kisses and tears are characteristic of the emotion of orientals. But love was stirring in the heart of Jacob and he gave himself in service (practically as a slave) for seven years to pay the bride-price which Laban set upon his beloved

Rachel. So intense was his love for her that when Laban deceived him and gave him Leah, Jacob readily contracted to serve another seven years for her. This deception not only caused him to have to serve another seven years, but gave him two wives instead of one.

During his twenty years' stay at Haran eleven of Jacob's children were born. The story as given in the Scripture describes his home life as very unattractive. He had been forced into polygamy, and out of it grew favoritism and jealousy, such as would yield little of happiness for him and his wives. None of the hideousness of it is covered up, the sacred writer seeming desirous of letting us feel something of the awful reaping that comes to him who sows evil. It may also be of use in creating an aversion to polygamy.

But in spite of this the sons of Jacob became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel that were later united under a common head into the kingdom of Israel. Their common ancestry did much to hold them to a vivid sense of blood-kinship and political unity. They and the tribes descending from them fall into three groups. (1) Children of Rachel—his favorite wife. These were Joseph and Benjamin, and Benjamin and Joseph's sons, Ephriam and Manasseh, were the three powerful tribes of central Canaan and in the early times were the most important tribes of all. (2) Six sons of Leah, his hated wife. These were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. In early importance these stood next to the Rachel tribes. The first four of them settled in the South and came to be particularly important. (3) Four sons of his slaves, or concubine wives—Dan, Napthali, Gad and Asher. These were never strong tribes and were never so well assimilated to the whole nation as were the others.

77. **His Experience with Laban.** In their dealings with each other Jacob and Laban were all the time trying to swindle, or outwit each other. This contest of wits reflects the moral standards of the two men, and makes one feel that they counted it a virtue to swindle another out of his property or labor. At first Laban got the better of the contest. But soon the tide turned. Jacob decided to leave. This gave him the advantage of

Laban, who knew that God had prospered the work of Jacob and, therefore, wanted him to stay. He used this advantage, and after an agreement, and by the use of a simple device known to eastern cattle breeders, soon won all the strongest of the offspring of Laban's cattle. Laban's deception of Jacob may have been justified by custom, but was not sanctioned by moral law. But the treatment received was calculated to make a profound impression upon Jacob. It would especially show him the ugliness of his treatment of his brother, Esau, and would teach him that we often suffer the very evils we perpetrate upon others. As for Jacob, his life at Haran was a constant manifestation of opposites. He faithfully serves, then tricks Laban. He sometimes manifests faith, and again appears utterly selfish and leaves God out of his plans. He is both affectionate and jealous, both chivalrous and downright, mean and little. He certainly is not yet an ideal man.

When Laban became angry about the increase of Jacob's cattle God appeared to Jacob and instructed him to return to Canaan. He then secured the consent of his wives to go with him, and secretly withdrew, taking with him his family and all he had. Three days later Laban learned of his departure and followed him, and, after seven days, overtook him. But God forewarned him the night before not to attempt any harm to Jacob. So, when he came upon Jacob's camp he only chided him. Whereupon, Jacob told him of how he had wronged him and of how God had blessed Laban on his account and, also had prevented Laban from grinding him to poverty. They finally made a covenant and separated, Laban returning to his place and Jacob continuing his journey to Canaan. Thus, after twenty years of exile, he returns to his home with large possessions and a numerous family.

78. **Meeting with Esau.** Now that he was on his way to Canaan, Jacob began to prepare to meet Esau. When he drew near to the Jordan he sent messengers to Esau to inform him of his coming. These men returned bearing the news that Esau, accompanied by four hundred soldiers, was coming to meet them. Jacob was alarmed and began to prepare for the worst. He

arranged his possessions in two groups in the hope of saving at least a part of it, sent forward a valuable present to Esau, and took his family across the Jabbok. But a crisis was on in the life of Jacob. He was conscious that he was not free from guilt and feared his own shrewdness which had won his former contests. He needed preparation of spirit and got it at Jabbok that night. There in the dark he was assailed by a man (the angel of the covenant) and fought all the night with him. He came out of this struggle with a permanent impairment of his physical strength. But he had gained a new spiritual strength. He was no more to be called Jacob, "a supplanter," but Israel, "a prince of God." From this time forward he was a new man. Religion became real and he built his whole future life on a new plan. He is still inventive and ambitious and persevering, but he is God's man doing God's will. He is now ready to confess his wrong to his brother and try to show it in his conduct. Thus he was prepared to meet his brother. The meeting with Esau was one in which both men manifested a generous and brotherly spirit, and it was clear that there had been no occasion for Jacob's fears. After the exchange of suitable compliments they separated. Esau returned to his home at Mount Seir, and Jacob, after a brief stay at Succoth, settled in the valley of Shechem.

79. **Experiences in Canaan.** The experiences of Jacob after settling at Shechem were varied and came in rapid succession. (1) He was put under the necessity of moving because his two sons, Simeon and Levi, slew the Shechemites and took their possessions. He was greatly grieved, but saw the danger to which his family had been subjected and moved. (2) By divine direction he moved to Bethel. Here he would have memories of the divine revelation as he was on his way to Haran, and here again God met him and renewed the covenant blessing. (3) Benjamin was born and Rachel died. After leaving Bethel he went south and had arrived in the vicinity of Ephrath (which is Bethlehem). Here Rachel gave birth to Benjamin and then died. (4) An outrage in his family. On his way to Hebron his oldest son had committed an outrage in his family

and all the young men seem to have become very wild and reckless. This was grief of another kind, added to that of the loss of Rachel. (5) He went on to Hebron the home of his father and was again at the home of his childhood. (6) He was soon called upon to bury his father who still lived there. Through all these experiences he certainly exhibited a new spirit from that of Jacob of old.

80. **His Sojourn and Death in Egypt.** Here we come to the saddest portion of his life. Joseph, the son of his beloved Rachel, had been sold by his own sons, and for twenty years he grieved over his loss. Then, finally, a great famine came and a foreign ruler in Egypt demanded his younger son, Benjamin. In it all he held close to the promise of God and ripened into a beautiful old age. At length, the cloud breaks. His sons are given back. He is received in Egypt and there is cared for the rest of his days. His sun set in peace in Egypt. He called his sons about him and gave them his farewell blessing and his bones were laid to rest with those of his father in the ancestral tomb of Hebron.

81. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) A man who has no spiritual ideal, and who is bent on physical enjoyment will soon become degenerate as Esau. (2) God even follows and recovers criminals who, like Jacob, are fleeing from their own crimes. (3) In our darkest hours God will come to us. (4) Our misfortunes and unjust adversity often develop our nobler nature. This will be true very certainly, if we manifest a cheerful and submissive spirit. (5) Jacob illustrates for us the conflict between the lower and the higher elements in a man's nature. (6) The meanest and most unworthy men are not outside the pale of God's blessing, nor is it impossible for them to be recovered.

82. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Differences in the character of Jacob and Esau. (2) Different cases of deception recorded in this section. (3) Various wanderings of Jacob. (4) Wickedness found among the members of his own family. (5) Jacob's disappointments and family troubles seen in the light of his early deceptions. (6) Descendants of Esau and of Jacob in comparison.

SECTION III. JOSEPH, THE PRESERVER OF HIS PEOPLE

(Gen. 39-50)

83. **General Statement.** These stories exhibit Joseph as cheerful and uncomplaining and possessed with an ambition that no adversity could destroy. With remarkable literary power and unity and with rare charm of style they so portray the highest ideals of integrity and truth that their moral value is inestimable. The following elements of them are important. (1) There are many sudden and striking contrasts. Such are Joseph's changes from a petted and spoiled boy to a slave in Egypt; from an overseer of his master's house to a prisoner in a dungeon; from that dungeon to the governorship of the most powerful empire of the age. (2) He wins all his successes because of his value to others. He is never promoted by means of any miracle, or armor, or conquests of power, but by faithfulness, business sagacity, and loyal service to others, and is truly a hero of service. (3) The use of his position in the interest of others. The service he rendered to his slave-master and to Pharaoh is certainly very unusual, and would be of doubtful propriety to western students of society. (4) The pathos and depth of the story. This is not surpassed in all literature, and is especially felt in the story of his relation to his brethren when they visit Egypt. Pent up emotion tugs at one's heart all the time as one reads of the anxiety of the brothers, the fear of their father, and the burning affection of Joseph.

84. **Joseph's Youth in Canaan.** (1) A petted child. Jacob showed his partiality to this son of his beloved Rachel by clothing him in one of the long-sleeved, many-colored tunics commonly worn by princes. It was a garment better suited to a life of luxury than of work and may have indicated his purpose for Joseph to have the family birthright. In spite of all this he was most trustworthy. But one wonders whether he would have developed into such a strong and useful manhood, if he had continued to be spoiled in the atmosphere of his father's home, instead of being sold into Egypt. (2)

Ambitious dreams. In his early dreams we discover the stirring of very high ambitions. One dream saw the work of his brethren subordinated to his; the other was interpreted by his father to reveal his expectation of supremacy in the family. He seemed to look forward to the position indicated by the birthright. But in the light of their providential fulfilment one can hardly bring any severe criticism against these early dreams. (3) Hatred of his brethren. The dreams of Joseph so stirred the hatred of his brothers that they were, no doubt, looking for a way to murder or dispose of him. They conspired to kill him, cast him into a pit or cistern, sold him into Egypt, dipped his tunic into the blood of a kid, and deceived their father into believing an evil beast had slain him. Here the curtain falls on a scene of family crime and sorrow, to rise again when Joseph's brethren go to Egypt for corn and remember their evil deeds while Joseph remembers his dreams.

85. **Joseph as a Slave and Prisoner.** Having been sold by the Ishmaelites to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard, Joseph took his position as a slave. But he was so faithful in all his duties, and worked with such success for the interest of his master, that he soon won the complete confidence of the Egyptian and was made overseer of everything belonging to his household. Now, because he was a goodly person and well favored, Potiphar's wife loved him and, day by day, subjected him to her blandishments. Moreover, the moral standards of the east are and were so low, especially in those homes where there were slaves, that the crime of adultery, which she urged him to commit, was easily overlooked. It probably meant also the putting away of Potiphar and having Joseph in his stead. Both his pride and his passion were tremendously appealed to. It was a crisis in his life, and his refusal is one of the high moral achievements of all time. But in refusing, he aroused the hatred of this unscrupulous woman and she, through base falsehood, had him thrown into prison. But he made the best of all prisoners, and proved so agreeable and helpful that he gained the entire confidence of the prison keeper, and was made a trusty and given charge over all the other prisoners.

86. **Joseph the Second Ruler of Egypt.** Here Joseph is to be seen in a place of power. From prisoner to governor! What a change! Note the new connection with his dreams. Because of them he was hated and sold into Egypt. Now a dream of the butler and baker, which he interpreted, led to his being called to interpret the dream of the king. His great wisdom in this so impressed Pharaoh that he believed God was with him and had specially fitted him for governor at such a time. Three things are of interest. (1) His family. In connection with his exaltation he was given his wife, and while in the position of power, there were born to him his two sons who were later incorporated into the tribes of Israel. (2) His faithfulness to Pharaoh. Nowhere did Joseph seek his own honor or usurp authority. He turned all honor and profit to Pharaoh and, in distributing the grain, bought all the land for him. This faithfulness and interest are not surpassed in all history. (3) His preparation for famine. The preparation was so ample that there was enough for all that came during the whole famine. All nations had to go there and, along with the rest, Jacob turned to him for assistance. This brings us again into touch with the patriarch and his family.

87. **His Dealings with His Brethren.** Here we come upon a story of thrilling interest. It is full of pathos and of seeming harshness, except as seen in the light of its outcome and as necessary in view of the past wickedness of his brethren. (1) They went to Egypt, and at first were imprisoned as spies. Simeon was held as hostage while they went home and brought their younger brother Benjamin. (2) They returned to Canaan with their supplies and told their father what had happened, but he refused to send Benjamin until dire need of food drove him to it. (3) The brothers went a second time to Egypt. This time Joseph feasted them, then put his cup in Benjamin's sack and arrested them and accused them of stealing it. They protested their innocence and were made to think that their old crime was now overtaking them. Finally, Judah offered to give himself as a bondsman for Benjamin that his father might be spared the grief of his loss. (4) Joseph makes

himself known. In the noble spirit of self-sacrifice and love for their father, which Joseph discovered, he was convinced that they were changed men, and, with much emotion and with all possible consolation to them, he told them that he was Joseph, their brother. In these stories we see the finest tests of character, both in Joseph and his brothers. They confessed and he forgave.

88. **Jacob's Last Days.** At the command of Joseph, who also sent along wagons to convey them, Jacob and his sons moved to Egypt. Joseph made ample provision for them by securing the consent of Pharaoh for them to dwell in Goshen. He also introduced his father to Pharaoh and they were cared for there during the rest of Joseph's life. Jacob died after having pronounced upon his sons and those of Joseph a parting blessing. Joseph, therefore, had the opportunity of aiding in the burial of his father. The story ends with the covenant people in Egypt and, although Joseph died there, he declared his faith in a coming deliverance and return to Canaan, and gave a dying charge concerning the removal of his bones when they departed. This request was carried out when under Moses they went out of Egypt.

89. **Joseph's Character and Accomplishments.** Of all men Joseph was in many respects the most remarkable. We have seen something of his trustworthiness in youth. But now we can look back upon a life of unusual integrity. He was tested from more standpoints than any other. His father spoiled him with favoritism. His brothers envied and hated and grossly injured him. He was tempted to lust and disregard for the rights of others by the appeals of a base, but highly respectable woman. He had to endure the wrong of years of imprisonment, during which virtue suffered at the hands of vice. He was subjected to all the perils of high honor and power. He had the opportunity to avenge himself of the wrongs he had suffered and especially to punish his brethren. All these were crucial experiences that put his character to the test, but he came forth out of them all as a conqueror.

Of all Biblical characters he is the finest example of faithfulness to others in all relations. Whether slave, or overseer, or prisoner, or governor he was absolutely dependable. He is the finest example of the true spirit of forgiveness. The generosity and even magnanimity, with which he not only forgave his brethren, but was able to show them the hand of God in it all, surpasses all ordinary bounds and sets Joseph out as altogether unique. More surprising than all is the constancy of his faith and unfailing presence of God which, in every position, was recognized. He was more uniformly triumphant in his faith than was Abraham, the father of the faithful. Abraham may have surpassed him in faith on the ground that he launched out on an unknown sea with no compass but faith, while Joseph lived in the light of all that Abraham and the other patriarchs did. Viewed from all angles the beauty and perfection of his character are above those found in any other of whom we have record.

90. **Confirmation of the Joseph Stories.** Here, as elsewhere, archeology has done much to confirm the Biblical record. There has been found a record of the years of great famine, and the Pharaohs of the period have been fully determined. Moreover, it has been shown that conditions were such in those times that many men of the humblest origin rose to prominence and authority. From the use of Semitic names and customs it is clear that the Semite people had considerable influence in Egypt. During the reign of Amenhotep III and his son, Amenhotep IV, several Semites, whose names are now known, rose to position of high authority. These facts indicate to us something of the spirit of the times and make it clear that the story concerning Joseph harmonized with that spirit.

91. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) Through divine providence our misfortunes often develop our nobler impulses of heart. (2) Unjust adversity cannot destroy a man of faith and integrity, if he will manifest a cheerful and helpful spirit. (3) God overrules evil for good so that all things can work together for good to them that love God. (4) To improve our small opportunities is the only sure way of securing a greater chance in

life. (5) Service to others is the surest way to greatness. (6) The wrongs we have done always confront us at the most unexpected and painful crises of life. (7) Our severest tests of character come in the most unexpected ways and at the most unexpected times. (8) Forgiveness and love for others is a high factor in character. (9) It always pays to be true and fair in our treatment of others. (10) Loyalty to one's humble, or unfortunate, kindred in the time of one's success is a sure test of nobility of character.

92. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) What are three reasons for Joseph not being on good terms with his brethren? (2) What do we know of Joseph's wife and two sons? (3) How did Joseph treat his brethren each time they went for corn? (4) The spirit and character of Jacob as seen in this section. (5) The evidence of divine providence seen in the story. (6) The expressions of faith found here.

SECTION IV. RELIGION OF THE PERIOD

Already we have had occasion to consider the idolatrous worship of the time and to see that all true religion was endangered and that God called Abraham out to promote in him the true worship of Jehovah. It is fitting here to give consideration to the type of faith which was manifested in him and his descendants.

93. **Relation to Other Worship.** The worship of Jehovah by the patriarchs had some things in common with the ceremonies observed in honor of other deities of the time, and was just such as might be expected of a nomadic people. They worshiped him at trees (Gen. 21: 33) and set up large stones as pillars upon which were poured offerings of blood, or oil, or fat (Gen. 28: 18) (35: 14). At first they, like others may have thought that God dwelt in these, but their conception of deity soon became spiritualized so that they were looked upon as simple altars upon which sacrifices were made by fire, and by whose savor Jehovah was pleased. Sometimes these sacrifices were accompanied by feasts or

meals in which the worshipers participated. Circumcision was practiced among other people, but for the most part on physical grounds, while with the Hebrews it was regarded as religious ordinance by which the one upon whom it was performed was consecrated to God (Gen. 17: 11). There are, however, other beliefs of the Hebrews, such as the appearance of deity in the form of man or angel for converse with men, and also in dreams that were current in the belief of those who worshiped other deities.

But while their religion had many points in common with the religions of surrounding peoples, it was, even in this patriarchal period, characterized by purer moral standards and by a higher conception of deity than prevailed in contemporary cults. Others held that a nation's God had a special care for its fortunes alone. But the destiny of Israel, as portrayed in the hopes and aspirations and covenant promises of the patriarchs, was not to culminate with its own honor or power. Their hopes were gradually shaped toward a belief in the coming Lord who now has appeared to bless us. They not only had the blessings of the past for gratitude, but much to raise their hopes of the future. The promise to Abraham, that in his seed all nations were to be blessed, implied that his descendants would be such that the peoples of the world could find nothing better than that which he would bestow. In Gen. 49: 10 there seems to be a special reference to the actual coming of our Lord. In this Shiloh to whom "the obedience of the peoples shall be" is thought to describe the Messiah as "Peace-bringer." Here is a conception far beyond all others of the time. Their worship is expressed in the term of rude altars, animal sacrifices, consecrated memorials, vows, pilgrimages, prayers, tithes and the rite of circumcision. All of these, studied in their true setting as found in the narrative, impress us with the earnest simplicity of their worship and with the fact that it was acceptable to God who blessed them in it.

94. **Conceptions of Deity.** Here we turn aside from the more general discussion to the special views which they held of God. They believed in: (1) The unity of

God. In all the stories of the period there is no trace of the polytheism that prevailed during the time. (2) The personality of God. There is not a suggestion of the pantheism and nature worship so prevalent in Egypt. They thought of God as a person who exerted the influence and performed the acts of a person. (3) His universal dominion. To them he was the God of the whole earth (Gen. 18: 25). He ruled in the valleys of the Nile and Euphrates as certainly as in that of the Jordan. He was God over Pharaoh, as well as over Abraham and Israel, and could control his destiny. (4) The holiness of God. In none of their portrayals of him are there any of the vices commonly attributed to heathen deities. They believe that the God of all the earth would do right (Gen. 18: 25). (5) The goodness and mercy of God. This is very different from the gods of terror worshiped by others, and is especially brought out in the stories concerning the deliverance from Egypt.

95. **Covenant Relation.** The whole Patriarchal Period, and in fact the whole of Hebrew history, finds its key in the covenant which God made with Abraham. It designated them as the "chosen people," highly favored of God, and made their history unique among the histories of nations. It was the controlling force in their migrations and national and family life. It led them to cherish an abiding hope that they were to possess a land given them of God; to become a great nation and to have a "seed" that would bless all nations. They all believed it unwaveringly. This covenant was given to Abraham in Chaldea, and later confirmed five or six times. It was renewed to Isaac and again to Jacob. Abraham believed it and buried his wife in view of it. Joseph believed it and based on it his dying charge to his people. Centuries later it was renewed to Moses in the burning bush, and, still later, expanded at Sinai into a national covenant. Such a covenant, creating such a faith and hope, could not fail to exert a great creative power in shaping the character of a nation. This made them a covenant people and they rested on the outcome of the divine covenant. Occupying such a place as this, God became very real to them, and their whole national life became underpinned with

a religious purpose and effort. Of all nations, Israel's beginning thus shows her destiny to be of spiritual import.

96. **Book of Job.** (1) Historical setting and problems of the book. The whole drapery of the book indicates that the transactions recorded in the book of Job belong to the patriarchal period, or to an earlier time. It seems to be a bit of patriarchal history so related and idealized as to raise the problem of evil and suffering, or of "the relation of calamity to character." Job, a man of integrity and exemplary piety, was overtaken by sudden and unprecedented calamities. In quick succession he lost his property, his children, his health, the confidence of his wife who wanted him to curse God and die, his friends who regarded him as an evil man, the joy of life so that he cursed the day of his birth and his confidence in the goodness saying to God, "Why hast thou set me as a mark for thee." These experiences raised the perplexing question as to how the suffering of the righteous may be harmonized with a belief in the holiness and mercy and justice of God. To this problem the whole discussion is given. (2) The solution of the problem. Opinions differ as to whether the book of Job solves the problem of suffering. But that it offers certain solutions is clear. They may be put down as follows: (a) The solution offered by the first two chapters and the concluding one (Chaps. 1-2; 42: 7-17). Here it is suggested that suffering is a test of character (of disinterested righteousness), and when rightly endured, is abundantly rewarded. (b) The solution of the friends. They argue that suffering is always punitive (15: 17-35), but also disciplinary (5: 17-27). They argue successively that his suffering is because he has sinned; that his claim of innocence is further evidence of his guilt and impending danger; and claim that his affections are just such as would befall one who yielded to temptations such as those to which he is subject. (c) The solution of Elihu. He agrees with the friends that suffering is closely connected with sin, but puts special emphasis upon the disciplinary purposes of it, pointing out that it is God's voice calling men back to him in an effort to keep them from sinning thereby showing that in trying to vindicate himself Job accuses God wrongly (33: 13-

28; 36: 8-16). (d) The solution of Job. Job has a long and puzzling struggle with the problem. He curses the day of his birth (Chap. 3), complains that God uses him for a target (7: 17-21; 16: 12) and charges him with injustice (9: 22-24). He seems for a time to see a solution of all such inequalities in an after life (19: 25-27). But he always lapses back into deep perplexity and seems to decide that something was wrong with the world so that as things are we could not discern the righteousness of God. In chapters 29-31 he gives a wonderful review of his life and makes a plea for a chance to present his case to God. (e) The solution of God. As if in response to Job's appeal, Jehovah appeared and gave him a vision of the reality and presence and power of God that satisfied him. He taught Job that there is unfathomable mystery everywhere, both in good and evil, and that the proper attitude for man is one of submission and faith.

Whatever else the book does teach, it very clearly rejects the traditional view that suffering is always to be explained as punishment for sin. It also shows that the only possible solution is one of faith in a loving and righteous God, and in a vision of life broad enough to include an eternity in which he may adjust the inequalities of this life. Job finally won a confident faith in God and a belief in a future life (19: 25-27), and was infinitely better off after his suffering. These ideas of the personality, holiness, goodness and sovereignty of God and of the personality and wickedness of Satan correspond to the teachings of the Genesis stories of this period of the Hebrew family. For further study of the book the author's "The Bible Book By Book" will furnish a suitable outline.

The following outline will guide the student in reading the book (1) Job's wealth and affection, Chaps. 1-2. (2) First cycle of discussion with his three friends, Chaps. 3-14. (3) Second cycle of discussion with his friends, Chaps. 15-21. (4) Third cycle of discussion with his friends, Chaps. 22-31. (5) The speech of Elihu, Chaps. 32-37. (6) God's first address, Chaps. 38-39. (7) God's second address, Chaps. 40-41. (8) Job's restoration, Chap. 42.

CHAPTER III

THE HEBREW TRIBES

(Ex. 1—1 Sam. 7)

From the Descent into Egypt to the Beginning of the Kingdom

The last period closed with the Hebrews in Egypt. Jacob and Joseph had died and their sons who were to be the heads of the tribes with their families remained there. Moreover, the blessing of Jacob upon them had paved the way for each to develop into a tribe. This they did very rapidly, and by the time of the Exodus from Egypt there were twelve large and separate tribes. For a long period, continuing to the time of the coronation of Saul, each tribe had its own government, but they often co-operated. This was especially so during the period of wilderness wanderings.

During this period of the tribes the Hebrews had peculiar and unusual relation to the Lord, who was himself their only king (Jud. 8: 23). There was, however, after the giving of the Law, a regular order of priests who performed for them certain religious services (Ex. 28: 1), and from time to time men called judges were raised up by divine appointment to lead and rule them (Jud. 2: 6). The government was wholly by the Lord and has been frequently called a period of Theocratic Administration.

97. **The Scripture Section.** The Scripture section for this period includes the Bible books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth and part of First Samuel. Some of these books are best studied in the discussion of the history recorded in them, but at this point we should learn something of the four which

together tell the story of Moses, the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the giving of the law and the organization by which they could live acceptably to God.

(1) **Exodus.** The name means a going out or departure. The subject and key-word of the book is redemption. (3: 7, 8; 12: 13, and so forth), particularly that half of redemption indicated by deliverance from an evil plight. It records the redemption of the Chosen People out of Egyptian bondage, which becomes a type of all redemption in that it was accomplished wholly through the power of God by means of a deliverer and under the cover of blood. It begins with the cruel bondage of Israel in Egypt, traces the remarkable events of their deliverance and ends with a complete establishment of the dispensation of the Law. The aim seems to be to give an account of the first stage in the fulfilment of the promises made by God to the Patriarchs with reference to the place and growth of the Israelites.

Two distinct sections are usually given by students; the historical, included in Chapters 1-19 and the legislative, comprising Chapters 20-40. The first section records: the need of deliverance; the birth, training and call of the deliverer; the contest with Pharaoh; the deliverance and march through the wilderness to Sinai. The second gives the consecration of the nation and the covenant upon which it was to become a nation. The laws were such as to cover all the needs of a primitive people, both moral, ceremonial and civic with directions for the establishment of the Priesthood and Sanctuary.

(2) **Leviticus.** This book is a continuation of Exodus, containing the Sinaitic legislation from the time of the completion of the Tabernacle. It has in it only two small historical sections, Chapters 8-10 and 24: 10-14. By the rabbis, it was called "The Law of the Priest" and "The Law of Offerings," but from the time of the Vulgate it has been called Leviticus, because it deals with the services of the sanctuary as administered by the Levites.

It reveals the place of sacrifice as an atonement for sin and shows how God accepts the sacrifice of a victim instead of the death of the sinner. It intends to show the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God. It points

the way for a sinful people to approach God and provides a manual of law and worship for Israel so that she may become a holy nation.

The key-word then is Holiness, which is found 87 times in the book, while in contrast with it, the words sin and uncleanliness (in various forms) occur 194 times, showing the need of cleansing. On the other hand, blood, as a means of cleansing, occurs 89 times. The key verse is, I think, 19: 2, though some prefer 10: 10 as the best verse.

(3) **Numbers.** Numbers differs from the other books we have studied, Genesis tells of creation, Exodus of redemption, Leviticus of worship and fellowship while Numbers puts emphasis on work and service. All the types of the book bear on this twofold idea, much of it being involved in their journeying.

It was named from the two enumerations of the people at Sinai, Chapter 1, and at Moab, Chapter 26. There was fighting ahead and all who could fight were mustered in. Emphasis was put on this by the continued repetition of the phrase "all that are able to go forth to war" which occurs fourteen times in the first chapter.

The history covered is a period of a little more than thirty-eight years (Num. 1: 1; Deut. 1: 3) and is a record of how Israel marched to the border of Canaan, wandered thirty-eight years in the wilderness while the old nation died and a new nation was trained in obedience to God and then returned to the border of the promised land.

(4) **Deuteronomy.** The name comes from the Greek word which means a second or repeated law. It contains the last words of Moses which were likely delivered during the last seven days of his life. It is not a mere repetition of the law, but rather an application of the law in view of the new conditions Israel would meet in Canaan, and because of their former disobedience. They are now on the plains of Moab soon to enter the promised land and the law given at Sinai was explained in such a way and such new laws given as to both warn Israel against disobedience and encourage them to obedience. They were urged to "know God," "love God," and "obey God."

The occasion and necessity for the Book lies in two facts. A crisis had come in the life of Israel. The life of the people was to be changed from that of wandering in the wilderness to that of residence in cities and villages and from dependence upon heavenly manna to the cultivation of the fields. Peace and righteousness would depend upon a strict observance of the laws. The second fact was the new religion of Canaan against which they must be put on guard. The most seductive forms of idolatry would be met everywhere and there would be great danger of yielding to it.

SECTION I. THE BONDAGE AND DELIVERANCE

(Exodus 1—14)

98. **Egyptian Life and Religion.** From the Bible and inscriptions we know much of the life of the Egyptians. They shaved the beard (Gen. 41: 14); prophesied with the cup (Gen. 44: 5); embalmed the dead (Gen. 50: 2, 3, 26); manufactured papyrus baskets (Ex. 2: 3). Their homes were surrounded by large flower gardens and their sitting rooms were carpeted and adorned with most elegant furniture. There was abundant music, and they were given to festivities and to seeking pleasure and ease. The priests and soldiers were privileged classes, while the artisans and husbandmen were counted as inferior. There was a great slave population which was ground to pieces under the heavy hand of the law. Their gods were of three ranks. The chief among the first rank corresponded to Jupiter of the Greeks. The Sun-god and that which corresponded to Mercury were the greatest in the second rank. The chief among those of the third rank were Osiris and his wife, Isis. Osiris is traditionally the first king, and he and his wife were said to be the only gods worshiped by all the Egyptians. They worshiped many animals, the most remarkable of which was Opis, the sacred bull of Memphis, under whose form Osiris was worshiped. The bull was kept in a magnificent temple, attended by priests and worshiped by all the people.

99. **The Length of Israel's Stay in Egypt.** The length of time the Hebrews remained in Egypt is a most perplexing question. Exodus 6: 16-20 makes Moses the fourth generation from Levi (See Gen. 15: 16; Num. 26: 57-59). This would make the time about 150 years. Genesis 15: 13 predicts that it will be 400 years. Exodus 12: 40 says they were there 430 years, and Paul in Galatians says that it was 430 years from Abraham to Sinai. These apparently conflicting dates may be explained because of the different methods of counting generations. The long lives of the men of that early period may have made the difference, or they may have had a different point to mark the beginning or end of the sojourn. Certainly Paul seems to think of the whole time from Abraham's call to the time of Moses. If the Pharaoh of the oppression was Rameses, the period of 430 years would about correspond to the historical data. Josephus and the translators of the Greek and Samaritan versions gave the time as 215 years. This would seem to follow Paul's idea, allowing half of the time from Abraham to the descent into Egypt, and the other half for their stay there. This on a basis of long lives probably harmonizes with the idea of four generations.

100. **The Oppression.** Because of the radical changes in political and religious conditions, and because of the great building enterprises which he undertook, it is common to consider Rameses II the greatest of the nineteenth dynasty, who reigned sixty-seven years, as the Pharaoh of the oppression who "knew not Joseph." The first part of his reign was very brilliant. He gave himself to great building enterprises and to commercial expansion. He was vain, energetic, pleasure-loving, tyrannical and given to much effort at display. He filled all Egypt with great statues of himself and with memorials of his building enterprises. But he added much to the prestige of Egypt.

The oppression of the Hebrews grew out of the fear of the king lest they should assist some of the invaders that constantly harassed Egypt on the north. This fear may have been because of their having assisted the shepherd kings, who had been the friends of Joseph, and whom the dynasty of the oppression had expelled.

To cripple them, the Hebrews were given exhausting tasks of making brick and put under cruel taskmasters. When they continued to increase in number, in spite of all the suffering and cruelty thus put upon them, Pharaoh first privately and then publicly tried to destroy all their male children. This order, while probably in force but a short time, was a severe blow to the Hebrews, whose passion for children and especially for male children has always been proverbial.

101. **Effect on Israel of Their Stay in Egypt.** Their stay in Egypt influenced the Hebrews in at least four directions. (1) In making them a nation. They were twelve nomadic families of seventy souls and some slaves, and in Canaan would have broken up into a dozen small and wandering tribes. But they went into Egypt and suffered, and were, thereby, bound together in a common bond and the way prepared for the work of Moses and for the real birth of the nation. (2) Toward their civilization. As nomads they were thrust into a settled home in an agricultural country and in the midst of a great material and intellectual civilization. They no doubt learned much of the arts of war and much from the agriculture and the social and political systems of that enlightened people. Some of their young men probably received an education that fitted them for the future leadership of Israel. (3) In giving them a language. There is no way to account for their language except on a basis of their stay in Egypt. Up to this time all Semitic language was cuneiform, but the Hebrews after this have an alphabetic language written from right to left. All acknowledge that these were Egyptian influences. The very existence of their language both corroborates the Scripture teaching of their long stay in Egypt, and bears testimony to the vast influence which Egypt exerted upon them. (4) In developing and confirming their national faith. Going out of Egypt through a religious contest would especially impress them with the glory and power of their God. Their suffering and deliverance led them to believe that their God was in sympathy with the afflicted and dependent, and made them ready to champion their cause against the oppressors. They learned to hate every form of

political and industrial tyranny, and all victims of oppression ever afterwards had their sympathies. Their religion came to have in it a strong social element that during all the future expressed itself in kindness to slaves, resident foreigners, hired laborers and widows and orphans, and demanded justice and mercy and love as prerequisites to the divine favor.

102. **Life of Moses the Deliverer.** Beginning with the second chapter of Exodus the rest of the Pentateuch records the wonderful life and works of Moses, the deliverer of Israel. As patriot, poet, liberator, law-giver and historian all the centuries are indebted to him. He is one of the greatest men of all history—far greater to-day than when he humiliated Pharaoh more than three milleniums ago. His life falls into three parts: (1) Forty years at the court of Pharaoh. He was born of religious parents who saw in him the promise of divine service and by faith trusted him to the providence of God. This providence gave him the care and religious training of his Hebrew mother, and also trained him in all the wisdom and culture of the Egyptians (Acts 7: 22). Thus was he given the highest intellectual culture and the sublimest faith in the world. (2) Forty years in the desert. At the age of forty Moses faced a crisis. Would he yield to luxury and worldly glory and a false view of life or renounce the royalty of Egypt and cast his lot with his enslaved people and trust their God! He made the choice of faith and struck for the freedom of the Israelites (Heb. 11: 24-26; Acts 7: 20-29). Finding them not prepared to follow his leadership, he fled into the desert of Midian. Here he would now be further prepared for his task. He would gain intimate knowledge of all that great wilderness through which for forty years he was to lead Israel in their wanderings. Here also God appeared to him and gave him full and ample instructions concerning the task of delivering out of bondage this crushed slave race, which he was to fashion into a nation of the purest spiritual and moral ideals the world had ever known. Here also he secured his family. (3) Forty years as leader and law-giver of Israel. In obedience to the divine instructions he went back to Egypt, organized his people, com-

pelled Pharaoh to let them depart, and for forty years led them in their wilderness wanderings.

103. **Moses' Call and Task.** (1) The call. The call of Moses had in it both a human and a divine element. Like all great leaders and benefactors of the race, the cry of the needy and oppressed was a call to him to enlist in their service. This element of a call, without which there is no worthy work for men, was furnished by his knowledge of the needs of the Hebrews. But God also heard their cry and, according to his covenant with Abraham, sent Moses to deliver them from the tyranny of Pharaoh. (2) The task. The task of Moses was three-fold. First, political. He was to deliver out of the power of the mightiest king in the world, 600,000 men together with their children and possessions, and was to give these emancipated slaves laws, and to so unite them into a nation that they would survive the attacks of hostile nations and of civil dissension among themselves. Second, social. He was to provide rules to govern their social relations so that the individual and the family might be clean and all their relations to each other be just and helpful. Third, religious. He was to show Egypt the weakness and failure of her idolatrous worship and to establish in the wilderness the true worship of the one real God who is ruler over all. Such a political, social and religious task led to his enactment of a wonderful code of civil, sanitary, moral, ceremonial and religious laws. (3) Encouragements to the task. The time seemed ripe for action. The great king of Egypt had died and eighty years of weak government had followed. Then God overruled all his objections, laid it on him as a duty, gave him two miracles with which to win his people, and appointed Aaron to assist him. He had the suitable time, the sense of personal obligation and the promise of divine aid to encourage him.

104. **Contest With Pharaoh.** (1) Preparation. This most remarkable contest was preceded by suitable preparation. Moses informed the Hebrews concerning the purposes of God and, by the use of the signs which God had given him, induced them to enter heartily into the divine plan. He then so organized them that the ex-

pedition could go forward in order. This done, Pharaoh was requested to let them go and worship, but he replied by putting added burdens upon the Hebrews. This led to a contest between Moses and the magicians of Egypt, in which Moses showed that he represented a greater power than that of Pharaoh. (2) The ten miracles. Ten national calamities—water turned to blood, frogs, lice, flies, murrain, boils, hail, locusts, darkness and the death of the first born—befell Egypt. Most of them were not unusual occurrences in Egypt, but were proven to be supernatural by their intensity, by their coming in such rapid succession, by the fact that they came and went at the command of Moses, and by the exemption of Israel from at least eight of them; also by the fact that the writer of Exodus, the Egyptians and the Hebrews all believed that in them God manifested his special power. (3) Religious purpose. This whole struggle was based upon the request of Moses that Israel be allowed to go into the wilderness and worship (Ex. 5: 3). It was not merely a struggle between Moses and Pharaoh, but between the God of Israel and the gods of Egypt. God proposed to show them his power. (Ex. 7: 17) and to execute judgment against the gods of Egypt (Ex. 12: 12). Each plague was, therefore, calculated to frustrate Egyptian worship or to humiliate an Egyptian god. Two illustrations will suffice. All of their worship was performed through priests, but no priest could serve if any insect had touched him since he had gone through a process of cleaning. But they could not free themselves from the pollutions of the lice which covered everything and hence no one in all Egypt could worship. In smiting the cattle with murrain God humiliated the sacred bull of Memphis, which represented the most universal worship of the nation. If he was not stricken himself, he was shown to be powerless to protect the rest of the cattle. In some such way the plagues showed all the Egyptian gods to be powerless and destroyed the people's faith in them. They also showed the superiority of Jehovah, and impressed not only Israel but all the world.

105. **Passover Feast.** Before the death of the first born, which was the final plague, God instituted the Passover to celebrate their deliverance from Egypt and especially the passing of the death angel over the Hebrew homes. A paschal lamb was slain and its blood sprinkled upon the door posts and lintels of their dwellings. The angel saw the blood and spared the first born of the Hebrews. This became a beautiful figure of Christ and his saving blood. Having thus celebrated beforehand their victory, the tenth plague fell and there was death in every Egyptian home. This plague convinced Pharaoh and his people of the folly of resisting Jehovah, and assured Israel of power to do his will. When that stroke fell Israel's fetters fell and she was hurriedly driven forth to freedom. The Passover was ever afterward celebrated annually in remembrance of this great deliverance (Ex. 12: 18-21, 42).

106. **Crossing of the Red Sea.** For three days and nights after their departure God led them, going before in a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. These tokens of divine presence and leadership continued with them throughout all their wilderness wanderings. At the end of three days they had reached the Red Sea and were shut in on either side by mountains. But after they had gone Pharaoh had once more hardened his heart and hotly pursued them. When Israel found that he and his hosts with their war chariots were close upon their heels they were greatly frightened. But Moses quieted the people and God caused the cloud that had been leading them to remove to their rear and throw a shadow upon their enemies while furnishing them light by which to go forward. He also imparted a miraculous power to the east wind (Ex. 14: 21) that caused the waters of the seas to divide so that they could cross on dry ground. When Pharaoh and his hosts attempted to follow them God disturbed their chariots wheels and then, when in fear they attempted to return, he caused the waters to overwhelm and destroy them. Here, as in former miracles, Moses was God's instrument in performing the miracle.

107. **Significance of the Deliverance.** The significance of the deliverance is indicated by two considerations:

(1) The number set free. Men have suggested some problems concerning the question of the number who went out of Egypt. But taken as a whole, it seems far better to accept the definite and persistent statement of the sacred writers that there were about 600,000 men besides children (Ex. 12: 37; Num. 26: 51). It may, however, be explained that men need not be construed as warriors, but merely grown people, since only children and not women and children are to be added. This makes significant the movement. Tremendous issues were involved. To release all this company of slaves would not be accomplished without making a very great impress upon the people themselves and upon the world at large. And then, too, what would become of them? (2) The results. First of all it made a profound impression upon Israel. It established the authority and influence of Moses over the people. It settled the popular conviction of the goodness and power of Jehovah, their God, and made them ready to accept his leadership and protection and to enter into a solemn covenant to be loyal to him. Henceforth all Hebrew literature frequently refers to it. They made it the basis of appeal for proper treatment of all needy and dependent—that God had redeemed them out of Egyptian slavery. Their prophets made it the high reason why they should be true to Jehovah. But it had its influence with others also. Later on we shall find that other people trembled before them because they had heard of their deliverance. Still more, it meant that in one day the world had thrust into it a new and complete nation that would have to have a place and that they would finally displace some other people. They were to change the whole political situation. It required future history to disclose something of the meaning of that deliverance.

108. **Teachings of the Story.** The permanent values that may be derived from this section fall into two groups: (1) Those that were especially helpful to the Hebrews themselves. (a) Moses' authority was confirmed and the people were made ready for his leadership and teachings. (b) They were established in the popular belief in the power of God. (c) They were convinced that his goodness and mercy were directed

in a peculiar way toward them. (2) Those valuable for all time and for all people. (a) There is no chance in God's universe. He makes the most trivial matters serve his eternal purpose. He overrules for good the most crude and wicked plans of men. (b) No human power, whether of peasant or king or nation, can prevent the accomplishment of God's purposes. (c) Those who resist this power are overthrown, as were the Egyptians, and those who act according to the divine will are elevated and blessed, as were the Israelites. (d) It is dangerous to oppose or harm God's people. God will certainly avenge them. (e) A sympathetic recognition of a crying need is a necessary prerequisite to a divine call to service. (f) God will make no compromises, but will have all he desires of us. (g) Preparations for our work may be long and varied, and may include suffering.

109. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The number who entered Egypt with Jacob, and the number that made their departure with Moses. (2) The elements of the suffering of Israel in bondage. (3) The overruling providence seen in the story in incidents not found in the miracles. (4) The miracles of the story other than the ten plagues, with their purpose and significance. (5) The religious significance of the contest with Pharaoh, together with the appropriateness and significance of each of the ten plagues. (6) Where was the Passover instituted and what did it signify? (7) What did the pillar of cloud and fire signify? (8) Give the name of Moses' two wives and sons. (9) What two objections did Moses raise against obeying God's call? (10) How did God meet those objections?

SECTION II. THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

(Exodus 15; Deut.)

110. **Song of Deliverance.** When they were safe over the Red Sea and saw the overthrow of their enemies their feelings of joy expressed themselves in a great song of victory, in which they praised God and re-

counted the incidents of his work of deliverance. Their peril was so great and their deliverance so complete and so completely of Jehovah that it is difficult to imagine their emotions. There was no place for pride, but there was place for this great ode which shall ever abide as a monument of the deliverance.

111. **Journey to Sinai.** They could not tarry at the place of triumph, but must journey to Sinai where they were to be organized into a nation. While only a few stations on this journey from the Red Sea to Sinai can be identified, some are important to us. (1) They encamped at Marah. After three days in the "Wilderness of Shur" without water they reached Marah, where they found bitter, or poisonous water which God enabled Moses by a miracle to sweeten. This was the first example and evidence of divine support. (2) At Elim they found the water of twelve springs and the shade of seventy palm trees. (3) In the wilderness of sin. A month after they left Egypt the food that they brought failed, and God gave them the manna from heaven and the quail at eventide. Thus again he demonstrated his purpose to provide for their needs and thus began that miracle of mercy, the manna, which followed them through all the forty years of wandering and which Jesus used as a beautiful symbol of himself as the bread of heaven. (4) At Rephidim. The cloud which guided them through all their forty years in the wilderness now led them to Rephidim. Here at the command of God Moses smote a rock and opened up from it an abundant supply of water. Here also they encountered and defeated the Amalekites, a tribe of Edomites, who still kept up the enmity of Esau, their father, against Jacob. Here also Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came to them bringing Moses' wife and sons, and upon Jethro's advice the people were thoroughly organized. (5) From Rephidim they came to Mount Sinai where they encamped for a whole year.

112. **Mount Sinai-Horeb.** There have been many different opinions concerning the location of this sacred mountain, which is sometimes called Horeb (Ex. 3: 1; 17: 6; etc.). All the Old Testament references to it clearly indicate that it was in the vicinity of Edom and

connected it with Mount Seir (Deut. 32: 2; Jud. 5: 4, 5). Several points have been put forward as the probable site, but none of them can be claimed with certainty. All of the evidence, both of the Scripture and of the discoveries of archeologists, seems to point to one of the southwestern spurs of Mount Seir as the sacred mountain. But our failure to locate the exact mountain, or peak, in no way affects the historical reality of the mountain, nor the certainty that at its base took place not only the most important event in the history of the Hebrew people, but one of the most important in the whole history of men.

113. **Solemn Covenant of Sinai.** The covenant given to Abraham, often repeated to the patriarchs and recently renewed to Moses at the burning bush, is now expanded into a national covenant. The God who had called Abraham and led the patriarchs; who had seen their suffering in Egypt and had liberated them; who had guided and supported and protected them on their journey, now, in the midst of grandly impressive divine manifestations, brought Israel into solemn covenant relations with himself. It was a blood covenant, the most sacred and inviolable known to ancient peoples. Here half of the blood was sprinkled upon the altar and half upon the people, thus signifying that all had consented to the terms of the covenant. In this covenant Israel is obligated to loyalty, service and worship, while Jehovah is to continue to protect and deliver them. All the rest of the Old Testament is a development of this fundamental law—called "The Law of Moses"—and shows the application of it in the experiences of Israel.

114. **Moses Receives the Law.** The first time Moses went up into the mountain God delivered to him orally the law, and he went down and communicated it to the people who, with one voice, said, "All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." He went up into the mount again, and God gave him on two tablets of stone the ten commandments and certain instructions concerning the building of the tabernacle, the institution of priesthood and the offering of sacrifices. After forty days, during which time the Israelites had thought him dead, he came to the camp and found them wor-

shiping idols, and in anger threw the tables down and broke them. After condemning the people for their sins and interceding with God for them, he was commanded of God to hew out new tables and bring them into the mount. He was again in the mount forty days, this time without food or drink. God rewrote the covenant on the tables and he returned with them to the people with his face so aglow with the divine glory that he had to veil it.

115. **Purpose of the Mosaic Law.** There seem to be two purposes for promulgating this law: (1) To preserve Israel as a separate and peculiar people. To weld the scattered fugitives from Egypt into a strong nation, distinct from other nations, required laws that would make them different in customs, religion and government. (2) A second purpose was to provide additional spiritual light, that they might know the way of salvation more perfectly. Instead of leading them to believe that outward obedience to it would bring personal salvation, it pointed to salvation through a Redeemer. The sacrifices foreshadowed the substitution of the Lamb of God for them as a means of deliverance from sin and its consequences.

116. **Several Parts of the Law.** Taken as a whole the law contains three parts: (1) The law of duty. This law is given in the form of ten commandments (Ex. Ch. 20) and relates to individual obligations. They may be divided into three classes: (a) The first four define one's relation to God. (b) The fifth defines our relation to parents. (c) The last five define our relation to the other members of society. These ten words define religion in terms of life and deeds as well as worship. They reach the very highest standards, and at least in the last command trace crime back to the motive and thought of the mind. They point out the duties arising out of the unchangeable distinctions of right and wrong. (2) The law of mercy. This law is found in the instructions concerning the priesthood and sacrifices. They indicate several things: (a) The need of an atonement for the sinner's guilt. (b) The need of an inward cleansing on the part of all. (c) The redemption of the forfeited life of the sinner by another life

being substituted in its stead and only by that means. (d) The fact that God punishes wrong-doing and rewards righteousness. This is also called the "Law of Holiness," or "The Ceremonial Law," and was intended to show Israel man's sinfulness and how a sinful people can approach a holy God and themselves become holy. It, therefore, deals with such matters as personal chastity, unlawful marriages and general social purity, and with the religious behavior by which they were to be absolved from all impurity and symbolically made pure again. (3) The law of justice. This law is composed of miscellaneous civil, criminal, humane and sanitary laws, calculated to insure right treatment of one another, and thus promote the highest happiness of all. They may be grouped as follows: (a) Laws of kindness. These laws were designed to secure kindness and justice to each other, including slaves and also domestic animals. The law is most beautifully shown in its provision for the treatment of the poor, the aged and afflicted. (b) As to the rights of property. These rights were to be sacredly guarded and all violations, such as fraud or theft, were to be severely punished. (c) Laws of sanitation and health. These guarded the imprudent against the contraction of disease and prevented the wicked and careless from spreading it. Israel was thereby saved from epidemics of malignant disease, and the innocent and helpless were protected. (d) Laws of chastity. The sanctity of the home and of personal virtue was held inviolable and every transgressor, such as the man who should commit adultery with another man's wife, was put to death. Taken as a whole provision was made for every demand of the domestic, social, civil, industrial and religious needs of the nation. There could hardly be designed a happier life than the proper observance of all these laws would have brought to Israel. This legislation reached its noblest expression in the law of the neighbor: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19: 18), which is the final word in all matters of right relation to others.

117. **Agencies of These Laws.** Four factors, or agencies, make for the permanence and usefulness of these laws. (1) A national priesthood. The priests

were their most sacred officers. They conducted religious services, offered sacrifices for public and private sins, acted as teachers and magistrates of the law, and as the representatives of the people before God found his will for them. (2) National feasts and sacred occasions. Besides the Passover (already discussed) several other occasions commemorate great divine blessings. (a) Weekly Sabbath. The first mention of it is in Genesis 2: 2, 3. It is suggested in the division of weeks in Genesis 8: 10-12; 29: 27, 28. Mentioned as a weekly Sabbath in Exodus 16: 22-30 and makes a part of the law in Exodus 20: 8-10. It sets apart for God and our rest the seventh day of the week. (b) New moon. This was called the Lunar Sabbath and was observed on the first day of each month with suitable religious services and sacrifices (Num. 10: 10; 28: 11-15). It was considered by the Ten Tribes as a suitable time to go to the prophets for instructions in the will of God (2 Kings 4: 23). (c) Feast of Pentecost. This was celebrated fifty days after the Passover, commemorated the giving of the law and was observed by "first fruits" laid on the altar with special sacrifices (Ex. 34: 22; 19: 1, 11; Lev. 23: 15-21; Num. 28: 26-31; Deut. 16: 9, 10). (d) Feast of Tabernacles. This feast commemorating their experiences during the wilderness wanderings, was observed by living in huts or booths (especially those made of living branches of trees), and, since it was observed at the close of the ingathering of crops, became a sort of thanksgiving occasion (Ex. 23: 16; 34: 22; Lev. 23: 34-43; Deut. 16: 13-15). (e) Day of Atonement. This was intended to show the sinner's reconciliation with God and was the only day in the whole year when the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies and made atonement for the sins of the people (Ex. 30: 10; Lev. 16: 1-34; 23: 27-32). (f) Feast of Trumpets. This was the first day of the new civil year and was celebrated by the blowing of trumpets throughout all the land (Lev. 23: 23-25; Num. 29: 1-6). (g) Sabbatical year. Every seventh year the land rested, there was no sawing or pruning of vineyards, whatever grew was public property, the poor taking at will and all debts except those against foreigners were forgiven (Ex. 23: 10, 11; Lev. 25: 2-7; Deut. 15: 1-11). (h) Year of

Jubile. Every fiftieth year was Jubile. Its beginning was signalized by blowing trumpets and offering sacrifices. That year the land rested, all debts were cancelled, all alienated possessions returned and all slaves were given freedom, if they desired it (Lev. 25: 8-55). (3) A national sanctuary. The altar where God was supposed to dwell now grew into the Tabernacle and was placed in the midst of the camp. It was 45 feet long, 15 feet wide and 15 feet high, and was divided by a veil or curtain into two parts, one 15x30 and the other 15x15 feet. Since Israel was a wandering people it was so constructed that it could be easily taken apart and carried on their journeys, thus providing them with the symbol of Jehovah's presence. In the study of it we are to learn from the Bible and Bible dictionaries concerning such important things as the court, the altar of burnt offerings, the laver, the Holy Place, the Candlestick, the Table, the Altar of Incense, the Holy of Holies and the ark of the covenant in which were found other sacred things, such as the Tables of Stone. (4) National offerings. The law prescribes five great national offerings intended to furnish them with a way of approach to God. For convenience in study they have been divided and grouped as follows. (a) Sweet-Savor offerings. These are atoning in their nature. They illustrate the work of Christ in man's redemption. They are the burnt offerings, showing how he gives himself without spot to God for our sins; the meal offering, showing how the humanity of Christ, fully tested and tried, becomes the bread or support of his people; the peace offering, which represents Christ as our peace, giving us communion with God and thanks. (b) Non-Sweet-Savor offerings. These are perfect offerings overlaid with human guilt. They are the sin offering, which is expiatory, substitutional and efficacious, referring especially to sins against God without regard to man; the trespass offering, which refers particularly to sins against man, which, however, are also sins against God.

118. **Outline for the Study of the Law.** Without attempting to codify the laws and with a knowledge that certain regulations have been left out and that the topics

given somewhat overlap, the following is given as an outline for the study of the principal portions of the law.

1. The moral law (Ex. Ch. 20).
2. The civil law (Ex. 21: 1—23: 19).
3. The covenant broken and renewed (Ex. Chs. 32-34).
4. The law of the Burnt offering (Lev. Ch. 1).
5. The law of the Meal offering (Lev. Ch. 2).
6. The law of the Peace offering (Lev. Ch. 3).
7. The law of the sin offering (Lev. Ch. 4).
8. The law of the trespass (or guilt) offering (Lev. Ch. 5: 1—6: 7).
9. The law of the priest's conduct in making offerings (Lev. 6: 8—7 end).
10. The law of the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Lev. Ch. 8).
11. Some offering with related instructions (Lev. Chs. 9—10).
12. The law of pure food (Lev. Ch. 11).
13. The law of a pure body and home (Lev. Chs. 12-15).
14. The law of a pure nation (Lev. Chs. 16—17).
15. The law of pure marriages (Lev. Ch. 18).
16. The law of pure morals (Lev. Chs. 19—20).
17. The law of pure priests (Lev. Chs. 21—22).
18. The law of the sacred feasts (Lev. Ch. 23).
19. The law of the sacred years (Lev. Ch. 25).
20. The laws of blessing and cursing (Lev. Ch. 26).
21. The law of vows and tithes (Lev. Ch. 27).
22. The law of the purity of the camp (Nm. Chs. 5—6).
23. The laws concerning offerings for worship (Num. Chs. 7—8).
24. The laws concerning the Passover and cloud (Num. 9: 1-14).
25. The laws of religion (Deut. 12: 1—16: 17).
26. The laws of political life (Deut. 16: 18-20 end).
27. The laws of social and domestic relations (Deut. Chs. 21-26).

119. **Journey to Kadesh-barnea.** After camping before Sinai for a little over a year, during which time they received the law and were gradually organized

into a nation, and after making special preparations for the journey, such as numbering the people, the cloud, by which they were always led from the time of their departure from Egypt to their entrance into Canaan, arose from the tabernacle and set forward. It led them from the sacred mountain to Kadesh-barnea. We cannot trace this journey which required eleven days (Deut. 1: 2), but it was made notable by several events which should be considered: (1) At Paran Moses made an urgent appeal to Hobab, his brother-in-law, to join the host of Israel and was refused (Num. 10: 29-32). (2) At Taberah the fire of Jehovah burned throughout the camp because of their murmurings (Num. 11: 1-3). (3) To relieve Moses of the weight of the burden seventy elders were appointed with the wisdom of the spirit (Num. 11: 4-25). (4) The sending of the quail and the death of the people by plague (Num. 11: 31-35). (5) Miriam, the sister of Moses, was smitten with leprosy because with Aaron she rebelled against Moses and spoke disrespectfully of him (Num. 12: 1-16).

120. **Twelve Spies and Israel's Break-down of Faith.** (Num. Chs. 13, 14.) From Kadesh Moses sent twelve men to learn of the fruitfulness and people of Canaan. All returned praising the country and bearing evidences of its great fruitfulness, but ten of them did not believe they could conquer it. By yielding to their opinion the nation's faith utterly broke down and they not only refused to try to enter Canaan, but proposed to return to Egypt, and attempted to kill Caleb and Joshua who tried to encourage them against the false spies. This was a national crisis. Often before their faith had weakened and wavered and caused them to murmur against God or Moses. But never before had they turned their backs on the land of promise and their faces toward the house of bondage. This was a climax of unbelief (Heb. 3: 19)—a rebellion for which God sentenced them to forty years of wandering in the desert. All of them above twenty years of age, except Caleb and Joshua, were not only forbidden to enter the promised land, but were doomed to die in the wilderness. It is one of the saddest historical consequences of sin.

121. **Pathos of the Forty Years.** Here is a story of deepest pathos and sadness. (1) In the experiences of Israel. Their sad experiences during these forty years arouse our sense of pity. They are years of suffering and unhappiness and death in this lonely wilderness. (2) In the experiences of Moses. These are the most sorrowful of all. He is on the border of the land of promise and expectation, but by their sin is compelled to turn back and spend forty years in that bare and uninteresting desert. Here he buried Miriam, his sister, and Aaron, his brother and helper; was complained at and finally led to commit a sin that prevented his entering Canaan; appointed his successor, saw the strong men of Israel die and was himself buried. What a pathos in it all! The two most important incidents of the early part of the period are: (1) The rebellion of Korah with the consequent punishment by death of the offenders. (2) The budding of the rod of Aaron by which the appointment of Aaron's family as priests was duly attested. The chief incidents of the rest of the period will be treated in topics that are to follow. Finally, after thirty-eight years (Deut. 2: 14), Israel is again at Kadesh (Num. 20: 11) where the spies led them to make their calamitous blunder. Here at this time there happened three important events: (1) Miriam, Moses' sister, died and was buried. (2) Moses smote a rock and brought forth water for their needs, but because he sinned in connection with this act Jehovah decreed that he should not enter the land of promise. (3) Moses asked permission of the King of Edom to pass peaceably through his land and was refused.

122. **From Kadesh to the Jordan.** (1) The journey around Edom. When they were refused passage through the land of Edom, their kinsmen (Num. 20: 14-21), the Hebrews, made a long journey around. On this journey occurred three highly important events: (a) The death of Aaron on Mount Hor (Num. 20: 22-29). (b) The defeat of the King of South Canaan and the laying waste of his country to Hormah (Num. 21: 1-3). (c) The sending of the fiery serpents among them and the brazen serpent as a remedy (Num. 21: 4-9). (2) Their experiences at the River Arnon. They jour-

neyed on, passing the country of Moab, and finally came to the river Arnon (Num. 21: 13), which is the boundary line between Moab and the Amorites. Here also were some important events: (a) They came into contact with Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and defeated him and possessed his land (Num. 21: 23, 24). (b) They defeated Og, the king of Bashan (Num. 21: 33-35). This victory enabled them to pass on to Moab beyond the Jordan at Jericho. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of Manasseh settled in this conquered territory. Psalms 135 and 136 so dwell upon the victory over Sihon and Og, together with the overthrow of Pharaoh, as to indicate Israel's belief that they rank along with their deliverance from Egypt.

123. **Prophecies of Balaam.** (Num. Chs. 22-24). Balak, the King of Moab, was greatly alarmed because these conquerors of Sihon and Og had settled just north of him. He sent to Balaam, a famous soothsayer, or wise prophet of Chaldea, whose curses were said to have extraordinary effect, and sought at all cost to have him curse Israel. But instead he revealed how wonderfully Israel was blessed of God, and how a scepter would rise out of Israel and smite and destroy Moab. This strange man, Balaam, seems to have had the gift of prophecy without its grace. He had knowledge of future events, but sought to use it to his own advantage. He was a money-loving prophet and tried repeatedly to speak a good word for Moab so that he might secure the reward offered by Balak. But Jehovah seems to have compelled him to speak to Israel's advantage. His language fitly describes the material splendor and the glorious victories of the reign of David, and describes the spirit of Israel while the United Kingdom was standing at the zenith of its power. In a beautiful way also he pointed to the Messiah, who should put all enemies under his feet. He seems to have accomplished his desire by causing Balak, through pretensions of friendship, to participate in the idolatrous and impure festivities of Moab (Num. 25: 1-5; 31: 15—16; Rev. 2: 14). By yielding to this wickedness Israel fell under the divine curse and Balaam may have secured the reward of Balak. The whole story seems to imply that the

Hebrew historians did not believe that divine revelations were limited to seers and prophets of their own race.

124. **Last Acts of Moses.** Events are now transpiring in rapid succession and the story hastens to the close of the career of Moses, the great leader, prophet, priest and judge of Israel. These last days have in them several matters worthy of special study: (1) The final numbering of the people preparatory to their going into Canaan (Num. Ch. 26). (2) The sending of an expedition to destroy the Midianites (Num. Ch. 31). (3) The appointment of Joshua as his successor (Num. 27: 15-23). (4) The settlement of two and a half tribes, Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, on the east side of the Jordan (Num. Ch. 32). (5) The appointment of the cities of refuge (Num. 35: 6-28; Deut. 19: 1-13; Josh. 20: 7-9). (6) The delivery of his farewell addresses (Deut. 31: 1-30). (7) Final charge to Joshua (Deut. 31: 14-23). (8) His song (Deut. Ch. 32). (9) His farewell blessing on Israel (Deut. Ch. 33). (10) His death (Deut. Ch. 34).

125. **Last Scene On Moab.** (1) The scene. Moses is delivering his farewell messages. He recounted their journeys in the wilderness and the goodness of God upon them. He reminded them of all of God's law and gave such new instructions and interpretations as they would need in their new condition in the promised land. He painted in frightful colors the terrible doom that would come to them, if they were disobedient, and eloquently described the blessing of loyalty to God. After being called of God into the mountains to die, he pronounced, in one of the most beautiful passages in all the Scripture, his farewell blessing upon each of the tribes. (2) The solemnity of the occasion. How solemn must have been this occasion! They were for the last time listening to his voice. With what veneration they must have gazed upon him. He it was that Jochebed with loving hands had laid in the bulrushes when one hundred and twenty years ago Pharaoh had persecuted them. He was the man that had so nobly chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the attractions and honors of Egypt. His eyes under

the shadow of Horeb had seen the burning bush and his ears had heard the call of God to be their deliverer. His hand had stretched out over Egypt and overwhelmed it with the plagues. His was the face that had reflected the divine glory of the mount after forty days of fellowship with Jehovah, during which time he received the law. That was the faithful and tried man that had often been wrongly accused, that had meekly borne so many trials, that had guided the people so faithfully and advised them so wisely, and that had refused, both from men and from God, honors for himself because he loved them so well. How they must have regretted their wicked murmurings against him! How their love for him must have asserted itself and caused them to wish he could live! How they must have hung on those last words! And the echo of his last words had hardly died away until his spirit had been called above and unseen hands had laid his dust in an unknown tomb.

126. **Character of Moses and the Significance of His Work.** (1) His character. In the study of the life of Moses one discovers several of the finest elements of genuine manhood. They may be put down as follows: (a) He was a bold and courageous spirit (Ex. 2: 12, 17; 10: 29; 11: 8). (b) He was not over self-confident (Ex. 3: 11; 4: 10). (c) He would not gain personal honor at the expense of others (Ex. 32: 11; Num. 14: 13-19). (d) He was without jealousy (Num. 11: 27-29). (e) He could overcome human difficulties—a cowardly and discontented people (Num. 11: 4-6), disloyal leaders (Num. 16: 12-15), jealous kindred (Num. 12: 2). (f) His greatest quality was that of a prophetic faith which saw the future of Israel and inspired them to it. (2) The significance of his work. Humanly speaking, Moses explains the great difference between the Hebrews and the people who were kindred to them. He accounts for their development from a company of disheartened slaves and from the careless habits of wandering tribes into a conquering nation, which was made irresistible by its belief in the strength and guidance of Jehovah. (a) He was a leader and as such heartened and disciplined them. (b) He was a prophet and as such taught

them the principles and ideals of social justice, purity and honor necessary for their higher development. (c) He was a law-giver and as such furnished them with civil, sanitary, social and religious laws that changed them into a sober, healthy, moral and right-minded people. (d) He was the founder of a religion and as such gave them such a conception of Jehovah and his requirements as to stimulate in them real loyalty to him and growth in goodness.

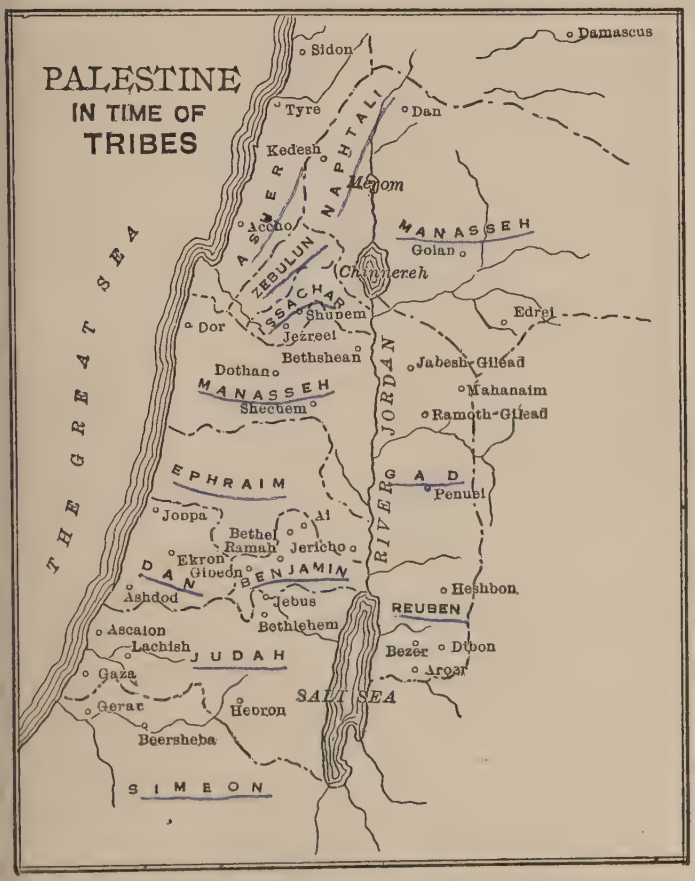
127. **Value of the Wilderness Experiences.** Already much has been said of the benefits of the wilderness experiences, but the following may be added. (1) As to the spirit of the people. Those who came out of Egypt were haughty, impatient, unbelieving and rebellious, but those who finally went into Canaan were far more submissive to divine providence, far less self-willed and more responsive to leadership. (2) As to hardships. Their hardships gradually, but most certainly, gave them habits of courage, persistence and self-denial. They developed physical strength and endurance and gained skill in warfare. They learned something of the importance of combined action that aided them greatly in defending themselves later. (3) As to society. There is little known of their social condition while on these wanderings. One wonders what they all did. There was some skill shown in the preparation for the tabernacle and for the garments of the priests. For the most part we can imagine they did not develop. Indeed they may have lost much of what they learned in Egypt. But the law of Moses did teach them the finest ethical principles and laid the foundation for the finest family and social relations. (4) As to religion. The greatest of all changes that have valuable significance were the religious changes. These will be more freely discussed along with the other suggestions at the end of the period.

128. **Teachings of the Period.** (1) Some lessons about man and his nature. (a) He is sinful. His whole nature is out of proper attitude toward God and is a fountain of evil. (b) He is, therefore, in need of redemption, and cannot serve God without it. (c) He owes obedience to God. (2) Lessons about God. (a) He is a holy God

who hates and punishes sin. (b) He is a God of mercy and forgiveness. (c) He has great power and might and is able to carry forward his plans or to change the destiny of an entire people. (d) His law is inflexible. Even Moses suffers, if he violates it. (e) He never forgets his covenants—hence he refuses to give to Israel the land of Edom or Ammon. (3) Lessons about redemption. (a) It is by blood. A victim must shed its blood before redemption can come. (b) It is by substitution. This is attested by the sacrifices. (c) It is by imputation, or the putting the sins of the people upon the victim. (d) It is by death and that of an innocent creature. In all this there is a revelation of Jesus who puts away sin and gives us the favor of God. (4) To rebel against God's appointed leader or to speak evil of him will be punished with an outpouring of divine wrath. (5) Early hardships often fit us for a more glorious destiny later.

129. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) What happened to Korah, Dathan and Abiram and why? (2) The content of the song of deliverance. (3) The purpose of the Mosaic law. (4) The several offerings (Lev. Chs. 1-7). (5) Moses' sin which prevented him from entering Canaan. All references to it. (6) The different victories of Israel recorded of this period. (7) The cities of refuge, their names, location, purpose and lessons for to-day to be drawn from them. (8) The principal events of Israel's past history mentioned in Deut. Chs. 1-4. (9) From Deut. Chs. 27—28 list the blessings and that for which they are promised and the curses and the sins for which they are a penalty. (10) The farewell blessings on each of the tribes (Deut. Ch. 33). (11) The death of Moses (Deut. Chs. 32-34). (12) The incidents of the period that have a miraculous element. (13) Other prominent leaders besides Moses, Aaron and Joshua. (14) The other nations mentioned with which Israel had contact. (15) Make comparison of the accomplishment of Moses with that of Washington and of Lincoln.

MAP OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF THE TWELVE TRIBES.



SECTION III. THE STRUGGLE FOR A HOME
(Joshua)

130. **The Book of Joshua.** Joshua is one of the twelve books including those from Joshua to Esther that are called historical. The key word of Joshua is redemption with emphasis on bringing them into their possession, as Exodus had stressed bringing them out of bondage. It shows how Israel was settled in Canaan according to the promise of God; how, by the destruction of the Canaanites, God punishes a people for their sins. It shows that God's people are the real heirs of the earth and that the wicked shall finally be dispossessed. The war it describes is one of the great wars of all times. No other was ever fought for a more noble purpose. It was a war in behalf of all the world. On its issue depended the civil and religious liberty of the people. It gave the world a new pattern of government as God's free nation and a new conception of religion, free from idolatry, vice and superstition. It established the nation of Israel through which came the Messiah to bless all nations.

There are several important typical matters. (1) The conflict with Canaan. In the wilderness the conflict was with Amalek who was an illustration of the never ending conflict of the flesh or of the "new man" and the "old man." In Canaan the conflict is typical of our struggle against principalities and powers and spiritual hosts in heavenly places, Eph. 6: 10-18. (2) Crossing the Jordan is an illustration of our death to sin and resurrection with Christ. (3) The scarlet line illustrates our safety under Christ and his sacrifice. (4) The downfall of Jericho. This illustrates the spiritual victories we win in secret and by ways that seem foolish to men. (5) Joshua. Joshua is a type of Christ in that he leads his followers to victory over their enemies, and in that he is their advocate in time of defeat and in the way he leads them into a permanent home.

131. **Facts Recorded.** In all this struggle one feels that the desire for a permanent home is moving them. From the time of Abraham they had been promised this land, and Moses inspired them to endeavor to free themselves from Pharaoh on the hope that they should come

to a country of their own. Their forty years of wandering in the wilderness had made them anxious for such a settled home. Moreover, the blessings of God on them all along the way, especially in relation to people who impeded their journey toward Canaan, all conspired to make them want such a home and to give them confidence in fighting for it. Nothing could be a greater incentive to them. The facts of the story are in three parts: (1) The conquest of the territory (Chs. 1-12). In this section we have the story of the crossing of the Jordan, the fall of Jericho and the conquest of the land, both north and south. (2) The division of the territory (Chs. 13-22), which includes the assignment of the territory of Canaan, the cities of refuge, the cities of the Levites, and the return of the two and a half tribes to the east side of the Jordan. (3) Joshua's last counsel and death (Chs. 23-24). But for believing the false spies this story would have followed Exodus and Leviticus and would have formed an unbroken story of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt into Canaan. Then the last twenty-one chapters of Numbers and the book of Deuteronomy would not have been written.

132. **Inhabitants of Canaan and the Nations Surrounding It.** (1) Inhabitants. That the population of Canaan was very dense is indicated by the fact that about three hundred cities or towns, many of which had been fortified, were located in it. There were many war-like peoples crowded into the country, but seven—the Hittites, the Gergashites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, the Amorites and the Canaanites—were the most important. The Canaanites, who had been there about six centuries, and the Amorites, who had lived there about ten centuries, were the two peoples that furnished the greatest resistance to Israel's occupancy of the country. (2) Surrounding nations. Around Palestine were many kingdoms, some large and strong, some small and weak, each of which furnished a problem for Israel. Among the more important were the Philistines, west of Judah, the Phoenician Kingdoms on the north, the Arameans or Syrians on the northeast, and on the east and southeast, the Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites, the last three being kinsmen of the Hebrews.

133. **Conditions Favorable to the Conquest.** (1) In Canaan. Egypt had crushed the Hittites and so devastated their land that it could not offer a powerful resistance. Northern hordes from and through Syria had broken the power of Egypt, the Hittites and the Canaanites. The power of defense was, therefore, at a minimum. (2) World situations. Assyria under the great Tiglath-pileser increased her borders to the coasts of Phoenicia and was feared by all peoples. Babylonia was not strong enough to displace Assyria, but was strong enough to dispute her supremacy, which together with that of Egypt and the Hittites continued two hundred years, and, thereby, gave the Hebrews ample time to develop and grow strong. All these things in the providence of God were greatly in their favor.

134. **Crossing the Jordan and the Fall of Jericho.** (Chs. 1-3). Jehovah now came down and commissioned Joshua as the successor of Moses and gave his assurance of victory. Joshua notified the people to prepare to cross the Jordan in three days. He also sent forward two men who visited the territory of Jericho, promised to save the household of Rahab, who aided them in escaping from the King of Jericho, and brought Joshua news of the fears the people had of Israel. Then came the crossing of the Jordan and the fall of Jericho. In their literature the Hebrews made these two great events, through which they entered Canaan, their permanent home, of similar importance to their deliverance from Egypt. The divine share in these great accomplishments was fully recognized. God it was that caused the waters of the Jordan to separate for their passage, and he it was that threw down the walls of Jericho. The advantage of this victory to Israel can hardly be estimated. Jericho occupied a strategic position, somewhat apart from other Canaanite cities, and the marvelous manner of its fall both encouraged the Hebrews and brought fear and expectation of defeat to the Canaanites.

135. **Complete Conquest of Canaan.** Israel contended against a far superior civilization, but won because the religious, as well as the civil and social life, was involved. A whirlwind campaign of about seven years

crushed the active and dangerous opposition. Then by a piecemeal process of probably forty-four more years the various cities and independent tribes were subdued. (1) The Jordan was crossed and Jericho was taken. (2) They pushed their way into the heart of the land. They took Ai after first being defeated because of Achan; established a central camp at Gilgal (5: 10; 9: 6) and celebrated this success with a solemn feast at Shechem. (3) They conquered the south country. This included the hill country south of Jerusalem. The chief battle of this campaign was against the five kings who conspired to destroy the Gibeonites. This was the battle when the day was lengthened at the command of Joshua. (4) They conquered the north. Turning now to the north, Joshua was victorious over the combined opposition in a confederacy headed by Jabin, a powerful chief of Hezar. While the combined resistance was now ended the Canaanites still possessed most of the land and the piecemeal process of subjugation began. It was not all accomplished by the sword, but was aided by the peaceable measures of inter-marriage, and treaties with friendly neighbors. When the territory had been overcome and united opposition put down Joshua with the help of Eleazar, the high priest, and the heads of the tribes divided the territory among the nine and a half tribes that had not received an allotment on the east side of the Jordan. In this allotment the Levites were given forty-eight cities well scattered throughout Canaan, among them the six cities of refuge. These cities were planned for the protection of innocent and accidental murderers, and furnished a fine protest against the spirit of passion and revenge of mob law, and a wise provision for calm and careful judgment in the administration of punishment upon criminals. Thus were all the twelve tribes settled in their own territory. It will be noted that Jacob, in adopting Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own made twelve tribes without Levi, whose sons were the priests of all.

136. **Joshua's Last Counsel and Death.** It is now about twenty years since the division of the land among the tribes and Joshua is the only living man who witnessed the power of God in Egypt. Realizing that he must

soon die, he called together the representatives of all Israel and delivered to them a farewell message. He recounted their victories, reminded them of their deliverance by the Lord, admonished them to serve him and warned them against disobeying his will. He put before them the alternative: "If it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites in whose lands ye dwell; but as for me and my house we will serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24: 15). Thus Joshua caused them to renew the covenant and set up a stone at Shechem as a memorial to it. Soon after this he died and was buried in his inheritance in Ephraim. His death was followed by that of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, who was high priest. The people also now buried the bones of Joseph which had been brought out of Egypt.

137. **Israel's Cruelty to the Canaanites.** It is a waste of sympathy to sympathize with the Canaanites in Israel's cruelty to them. The Scripture always emphasizes their wickedness and speaks of their overthrow as a punishment for their sins (Deut 9: 4-5; Lev. 18: 24-25). One shudders to read such passages as Lev. 18: 21-30 and Deut. 12: 30-32, in which are described their abominations practised in the name of religion. Everything evil was worshiped, their chief god being Baal, whose worship was fierce and cruel and always led to the greatest outrages. His consort, Ashtaroth, fostered in her worship impure and lustful abominations that are almost inconceivable in our times. God had for hundreds of years borne with this cruelty and impurity and lewdness and was now punishing them. The Hebrews were but the divine instrument as were the waters of the flood and the fire and brimstone in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. Moreover, the Hebrews were to found a new religious civilization and this method of punishment for the Canaanites would impress them with the terrible consequences of forsaking the worship of the true God. Joshua used it as an occasion to warn them against idolatry and declared that all the evils they had inflicted upon the Canaanites, and greater evils would be visited

upon them if they should become idolators. From both sides God's plans were being forwarded and we need not worry over the cruelty of the Hebrews or the suffering of the Canaanites who were reaping what they had sown.

138. **Significance of the War Against the Canaanites.** Of all the wars recorded in human history this was one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of them all in its far reaching divine consequences. No other war was ever fought for a more noble purpose, and no other has accomplished greater ends. Its purpose and valuable results are emphasized by the following: (1) It was a war for purification. The individual, the temple, the home and the nation must be purified. (2) It was a war for civil liberty. Israel was no longer to be subjugated, but, under God, to govern herself, and thereby to give the world a pattern of government as God's free nation. (3) It was a war for religious liberty. Idolatry with its vice and superstition was dominant everywhere. This worship must be dispossessed, and the people must be free to worship the one true God and Creator of all. (4) It was a war for the whole world. Israel was to be a blessing to all nations. Out of her and out of this land was to come Christ, her son, who would save all nations. The outcome of it involved all that the Hebrews meant to the world, and all that Christianity has meant and means to it.

139. **Character and Work of Joshua.** The work of Joshua made a deep impression upon this formative period of Israel's history. He was prepared for his work by his association with Moses and by such events as the defeat of Amalech, which he accomplished through divine aid (Ex. 17: 10-16). With all he had been called of God and set apart for the work of subjugating the Canaanites. In several fields he proved to be most worthy. (1) As a soldier and commander. Here he ranks among the first of the world. He was resourceful, brave, straightforward, fertile in strategy, and quick to strike (1: 10, 11; 2: 1, etc.). (2) As a statesman. In the counsels of peace he showed himself to be wise and generous. He displayed a statesmanship of the highest type in mapping out the boundaries of the tribes, and

by peaceably and permanently settling them in their several territories. (3) As a religionist. In the matter of religion he was actuated by a spirit of implicit obedience to God's authority, and by abounding faith in his benevolent purpose in Israel. He combined in his nature both gentleness and firmness, and exhibited in his dealings the disposition of both the lion and the lamb. His dying charge was full of earnest religious devotion. (4) As a type of Christ. As a type of Christ he led his people into the "rest" of Canaan, though not into the gospel rest which "remaineth to the people of God." He, like Jesus, led them into victory over their enemies, and then became their advocate when they sinned and met defeat.

140. **Settlement in Canaan a Forward Move.** When Israel entered Palestine they ceased ranging about the desert with their cattle and dwelt in cities, owned their lands and tilled the soil. This led them to rapid advancement along all lines. (1) Politically. They were now bound more closely together and so could develop a real national organization. (2) Socially. They were introduced in Canaan to a far more complex and cultured social life, and by it were enabled better to develop their own customs along right lines. (3) Religiously. Now that they are in their permanent places they would emphasize in their proper relation the share that the community, the family and the individual had in religious life and activity. Some did here and there lapse into idolatry, but in the main they remained true to Jehovah and their location in Palestine proved a long step forward.

141. **Teachings of the Story.** It teaches that: (1) God is at war with sin. He thrust out and destroyed the Canaanites because of their sin. Because of Achan's sin Israel was defeated and he himself was put to death. This showed that God is the enemy of all sin—personal, social, civic or national. (2) Religious victory and entrance into spiritual life are not accomplished through a law-giver, nor by keeping of the law, but by a leader or commander and through the divine power. It was not through Moses, the law-giver, nor by their own strength that they entered Canaan, but through Joshua,

their leader, and by the blessing of the divine power. (3) God keeps his covenants in spite of all the weakness of men. He brought them finally into Canaan, even after their sin had caused them forty years of punishment. (4) God decided the issue of battles and of wars with a view to the on-going of his kingdom. Only God and not the relative strength or preparedness of the contending armies can forecast the final issue of war. Israel was not comparable to the Canaanites in the strength of their equipment and position of advantage, but God was with them. That gave them victory. (5) The fact that one knows that God is on his side does not preclude the use of strategy and precautionary methods. Joshua did it constantly. (6) The failure or sin of one man may defeat a whole cause and that in spite of the faithful efforts of many others. (7) What is just severity to some is often the means of great blessing to others. The destruction of the Canaanites was a severe penalty for their sins, but it was an unspeakable blessing to all the future ages, because by it a true faith and a pure worship were preserved.

142. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The several tribes of Canaanites and the nations around them. (2) Examples of Israel's cruelties to the Canaanites. (3) The several battles of this war. List them and discuss the cause of success or failure of Israel in each case. (4) The spirit and co-operation of the two and a half tribes. (5) The fall of Jericho. (6) The strategy of the Gibeonites, its embarrassment to Joshua and the consequent slavery to themselves. (7) The miraculous element running through the narrative. List and discuss each incident that tends to show or that makes a claim of such superhuman element. (8) The place of prayer and worship in the book.

SECTION IV. THEIR STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL UNITY

(Judges 1—1 Samuel 7)

143. **Characteristics of the Times and Outline of the Narrative.** This was a time of transition for Israel. They had a common ancestry, language and religion,

but no national organization, capital or head. There was great uncertainty and confusion because "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jud. 17: 6), and also a time of great sinfulness (Jud. 2: 16-19). The condition is summed up in the oft repeated statement, "The children of Israel did evil in the eyes of the Lord," and "The Lord sold them into the hand of the oppressor" (Jud. 2: 14, etc.). It was a hard school for Israel, but was not all bad. After the victory of each judge there was a period of rest, and the aggregate of these years was three times as long as the years of oppression. It was a time of progress during which they abandoned tribal communism, got a firmer grip on God, learned to associate themselves together for the common good, and laid the foundation upon which the great kingdom was later built. The Scripture narrative falls into the following well-defined divisions: (1) An introduction, or the condition of Palestine at the beginning of the period (Jud. 1: 1—3: 6). (2) The Judges and their work (Jud. 3: 7—16: end). (3) Micah's idolatry (Jud. Chs. 17, 18). (4) The crime of Gibeah (Jud. Chs. 19-21). (5) The story of Ruth (the Book of Ruth). (6) The career of Samuel including the judgeship of Eli (1 Sam. Chs. 1-7).

144. **Dangers and Problems of Israel.** Several of the tribes did not drive out and destroy all the inhabitants of their territories. Besides incurring the displeasure of Jehovah this made for Israel several points of danger. (1) Danger of being exterminated. They were completely surrounded by hostile foes and must either crowd out these powerful neighbors or themselves be assimilated or destroyed. The outcome would depend upon the vigor of the campaign they waged. Their danger was greatly increased by the isolated condition of the tribes, and by their tribal government which lacked any strong bond of unity. (2) Danger of the change of occupations and of adjusting themselves to their changed conditions. Can the shepherds of the wilderness succeed as farmers, vine-dressers and traders? Can these nomads cease to rove around and live successfully in walled cities? Such changes would test their intelligence, their physical endurance and their

courage and determination. (3) Danger growing out of their form of government. They were a democratic people and their desert life had tended to give the same rights and privileges to all their families and tribes. Can such a democracy hold together in a contest with other nations? (4) Danger of social entanglements. They would easily adopt certain Canaanite customs and habits of life. There was intermarriage of the Jews with the new people. These things led to entanglements and brought them into relations that made it difficult for them to remain true Hebrews. (5) Danger of false worship. Baal was thought to control the land of Canaan and was heralded as the god of crops and the farm, while Jehovah was considered at least by others as the God of shepherds. They were no longer shepherds and would be tempted to worship Baal in the hope of making good crops. Then, too, Baal-worship ministered to their lusts, while the religion of Israel required purity and self-denial. One could be sought as a joy, while the other was considered a burden. It would be easy to rasp under the restraints of one and to long for the indulgences of the other. Here was a danger lest the true worship of the true God should break down.

145. **Other Nations.** Besides the Arameans, Amorites, Moabites, Edomites, Amalekites, Philistines and Canaanites, bitter enemies that closely surrounded them, other nations of this time were: (1) Egypt. After the exodus of Israel, Egypt seems to have enjoyed several centuries of prosperity. During this time her country was adorned with wonderful buildings, her religion prospered, her people were famous for their learning, and through colonization projects, she carried her civilization to many other climes. (2) Assyria. This was now a growing empire and destined soon to become the most powerful of all. (3) Babylonia. As in the time of Joshua, Babylonia was weak and generally at a disadvantage in contests with other nations. (4) Edom. About this time the Edomites became a people of considerable influence and on some occasions invaded Babylonia. (5) Mesopotamia. Before being absorbed by Assyria, Mesopotamia was a powerful nation and ravaged Syria and Palestine. (6) Phoenicia. This was the greatest

of the commercial countries. Its two cities, Tyre and Sidon, were centers of great influence. (7) Greece. The most interesting of the countries that began to show strength during that period was Greece. The inhabitants were wonderful in physical energy, in war and conquest, in discovery, and in capacity for educational development. They were fond of pleasure and had great capacity for the tasks of society, government and religion. They contrived a religious system that was conspicuous for the absence of the great priestly class of all other eastern systems of religion. However, it left the morally corrupt nature of man untouched and, therefore, did not contribute anything to the cause of pure religion.

146. **Judges or Deliverers.** (1) Nature of their work. From time to time Israel sinned against God and he allowed them to be scourged by the oppression of other nations. There was no central government that could deliver them, but on occasions God raised up military leaders, called judges, who delivered them. These judges were not ideal men, but they did believe in God and were patriots who rose above tribal jealousies and made themselves national benefactors and heroes of the faith. Counting Samuel and Eli, there were fifteen judges, and they made theirs a day of conspicuous personal heroism. (2) Six military judges and their work. Of seven judges we only know that they rendered conspicuous service, but know no particulars. Six commonly called military judges were brought forward by as many invasions by foreign nations. (a) Othniel, the nephew of Caleb, delivered Israel from the Mesopotamians who had oppressed them for eight years. (b) Ehud, a left-handed Benjaminite, slew their king and delivered the southeastern tribes out of the power of the Moabites. (c) Deborah, assisted by Barak, broke the yoke of the Canaanites, who, under the leadership of Jabin, king of Hezar, had terribly oppressed them for twenty years. (d) Gideon delivered them from the devastations of the Midianites, who descended upon them each year at harvest time and carried away their crops. The very life of Israel was endangered, and they so appreciated Gideon's work that they offered to make him their king.

But he refused, saying, "The Lord will rule over you." (e) Jephthah, a low-born freebooter and disinherited outlaw, was recalled and put at the head of their forces and defeated the Ammonites, who had invaded their territory. (f) Samson came next and was successful in overthrowing the Philistines, who had sorely oppressed them. Samson was one of those strange men whose life is so mixed with good and bad that it forms a veritable riddle, but the study of whose life will yield many valuable lessons of moral, social and religious import. (3) Eli and Samuel. These differed widely from the other judges. (a) Eli was high priest, as well as judge. He was a good but weak man and, by allowing the gross sins of his sons to go unpunished, caused their ruin, brought sorrow upon himself and caused a severe defeat for Israel. (b) Samuel was judge and priest and prophet, and is one of the outstanding Old Testament characters. He organized Israel into a great kingdom that led to their national glory. As a judge he won a notable victory over the Philistines. He founded schools for the instruction of the prophets. In this he probably rendered the most valuable service of his whole life. For these schools prepared religious leaders for the people. He anointed Saul for king, and after his rejection anointed David. He was the last and greatest of the judges and the first of the great line of Hebrew prophets after Moses. He, therefore, belongs to the period of transition from the judges to the monarchy, and forms the bridge that connects the old and the new order.

147. **Three Stories of Evil.** The book of Judges closes with three stories of the worst social and religious conditions of the time. (1) The image of Micah. Micah was a young Ephraimite who delighted in religious ceremonies as an honor to himself, but had no inward reverence for God. He stole his mother's money and later used a part of it to make an image for a family god. He used first his son and later employed a Levite for the priest of this shrine. Some Danite immigrants carried this image and priest into the north country where it became a sort of rival of the tabernacle which had been established at Shiloh. (2) The migration of the Dan-

ites. Part of the tribe of Dan, because their territory was so small and their foes were so strong that they could not develop, migrated to Laish, a peaceable settlement of Zidonians or Phoenicians situated far in the north at the foot of Mount Hermon. On their way they seized and carried off Micah's image and priest, through whom they had received encouragement while seeking out the new home. On arriving at Laish, they suddenly attacked and destroyed it, seized the lands and killed the people. (3) The tragedy, or crime, of Gibeah. This story gives us a shocking picture of brutal immorality, and shows us the awful and unreasonable punishment which excited passion drove the people to administer. The wife of a Levite was savagely abused and murdered at Gibeah, a town of Benjamin, and the other tribes fell upon them and slew all of the tribe but six hundred men. To their sorrow their fury and vengeance had not only punished the innocent, but had almost exterminated a tribe. As a whole these three stories reveal to us a spirit of dishonesty and theft, of idolatry and superstition, of lawlessness and cruelty, of lust and adultery, of passion and cruel revenge, of deceit and murder that could hardly be surpassed in all history.

148. **Two Stories of Purer Life.** In contrast with the stories of idolatry and sin, and especially in contrast with the story of the idolatry of Micah, and the crime of Gibeah found in the last chapters of Judges, we have two stories that tell us something of the finer life of those rude days. (1) The story of Ruth, the Moabite. The book was originally a part of the book of Judges. It affords us an idyllic glance into home life during the time of the Judges. It testifies that in the midst of the irregularities there was a God-fearing, friendly, industrious and happy community and family life in Israel. Others had turned away from the true God to false ones, but Ruth turned from false gods to Jehovah, to the one true God. Her love enabled Ruth to make the choice of faith by which she married Boaz, a Bethlehemite, and became the ancestress of David and Mary and Jesus. Her experiences are similar to those of a Christian, while Boaz, the rich Bethlehemite, in accepting this strange woman, is an illustration of the redemptive

work of Jesus. (2) The boy Samuel and his mother. This story, given in the early chapters of First Samuel, is scarcely less instructive and beautiful than that of Ruth. It describes the noble religious qualities of Samuel's mother that are the shaping cause of his greatness, and shows how great a place godly women had in the uplift of the Hebrew people. It also shows the vital contact which as a boy he had with Eli, the aged priest, and with the service of the sanctuary. Such experiences led him to be sober-minded, clear-thinking and of a deeply religious bent. It would be difficult to find a more devout and loving mother, and equally difficult to find a more faithful and promising son.

149. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) As to national decay. (a) It is caused by religious apostasy. False worship was always their first step toward downfall. (b) It is evidenced by religious blindness, political folly and social immorality. Blindness to the importance of religion, political blunders and moral corruption should be a warning to any people. (c) It results in political and social disorder, chaos and final ruin. (2) As to punishment for sin. (a) God surely sends punishment on the offender, whether an individual or a nation. (b) God's punishment is a matter of mercy and is intended to prepare the way for deliverance. (3) As to divine deliverance. (a) It never comes until repentance is manifested. (b) It is always through a deliverer whom we cannot find, but whom God raises up for us. (4) General lessons: (a) That united action is necessary for our success. (b) That God is always present to deliver when we cry to him out of distress. (c) That circumstances are not the determining factors in religion (see Ruth)

150. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The several military judges: (a) Their names in the order of their work. (b) Length of time each served or the period of rest for Israel after the work of each. (c) The enemy each judge had to combat. (d) What each judge accomplished against the enemy and the weapon he used—as an oxgoad. (2) Element of strength and weakness in the character of each of the principal men of the period. (3) Lessons of practical life and New Testament teaching illustrated or taught by the lives

and work of Gideon, Jephthah, Deborah and Samson. (4) Value of a trusting soul seen in Ruth. (5) Condition of Israel at the beginning and at the end of the period. (6) Good and successful parents with bad and unsuccessful children.

SECTION V. RELIGION DURING THE PERIOD

It is quite difficult to separate the religious from the other elements of suggestion. The moral and religious, the personal and national are united into one until the whole may be regarded as having a distinct religious purpose and meaning. The following will give some general idea of the trend of religious development.

151. **Religious Changes of the Wilderness.** Before they entered the wilderness the word of God was handed down to them from parent to child; now it is committed to writing and given to them as a permanent possession. The rules of worship had been very few and simple, but now they became many and elaborate. During the time of the patriarchs there was no special class of priests, but now the whole family of Aaron became a priesthood and was supported by the other tribes. One of the most significant things in the system was the very vital way in which they connected temporal rewards and punishments with religion. We are not able to tell how far they understood it all, but the New Testament warrants us in believing that in all this law there are many types and symbols of the salvation of Jesus. There are other symbols of Jesus and his work such as the manna, the light of the pillar of fire that accompanied them on their journeys, and the water that came from the smitten rock. All these and many other changes were such that they came into Canaan greatly advanced in religion.

152. **Nature of this Religion.** The nature and form of the religious services to which they were now committed is so elaborate as to forbid a complete mastery of it in a historical study, but the following will indicate the main elements of it. (1) Jehovah alone was to be

worshiped. This is important because others believed in many gods and made images of them. They also thought each god confined to one country or nationality and that the people of each country should worship its god. Israel would, therefore, be tempted to worship the gods of the people with whom they were associated. To prevent this they were forbidden to worship any god but Jehovah, and were not to use any image in their worship. (2) The altars and tent of meeting. In order to impress them with the simplicity and genuineness of worship they were to erect simple altars of earth or unhewn stone. They also had the tent of meeting where the presence of God could be found. (3) There was a system of sacrifices. In all there were five of these. Some were national, some official and some personal. Taken as a whole they had three purposes: to honor deity, to establish communion with deity, and to atone for sin. (4) There was a system of sacred occasions. These have already been discussed. (5) A family of divinely chosen priests through whom all the worship was now conducted.

153. **Religious Spirit of the Time of the Conquest.** As has been indicated above, the religious spirit of the nation at the time Joshua took command was very good. The experiences of the wilderness—its discipline in privation and in their necessary crucifixion of themselves to the world—had greatly blessed them. But now they are to come into a period of great prosperity and worldly comfort and, as often happened, prosperity proved far more disastrous than had the period of suffering. Not only was nothing important added during this period to their religious conceptions, but they seemed to close the period with far less zeal and loyalty than existed at its beginning.

154. **State of Religion During the Time of the Judges.** Here again we find nothing new. There were no new revelations of the Messiah except in so far as the several Judges in their work of delivering the people pointed to Jesus, the coming one. In all probability the law of Moses was in full force during those portions of the time when religious faithfulness manifested itself. By his providences God continually reminded them

of his hatred of sin and of his certain punishment of it. Everything was calculated to stimulate genuine faith. The great elements of true piety, manifest at least in a few, and probably in a great many, during portions of this time were a humble sense of personal unworthiness, a spirit of trust in undeserved mercy and forgiveness, and a steady and prayerful effort to do all that was well pleasing to God.

155. **Extremes of the Time of the Judges.** Since this is a transition period we may expect differences in moral and religious standards. Some things are stressed far beyond their importance, while other matters of greater importance are entirely overlooked. The following examples will indicate to what extremes they went in some things: (1) Things bad: (a) Murdering a heathen enemy was counted a virtue. (b) It was not a crime to steal from a member of another Hebrew tribe. (c) Might was right, no matter whom it injured or oppressed. (d) They would keep any foolish vow to God, even if it cost the life of a child, as in the case of Jephthah. Nothing scarcely could be worse than these bad principles. (2) Things good: (a) The marriage vow was held sacred. (b) Any covenant was held binding and sacred, as in the case of the Gibeonites. (c) They counted inhospitality a crime. The principles underlying these three are good. (3) Strange inconsistencies: (a) Micah would steal his mother's silver and then erect an altar to Jehovah. (b) Samson would keep his Nazarite vow, preserve his hair, which emblemized his Nazarite consecration, intact and would abstain from wine and unclean food, but he would also give himself over to lying, to sinful passions and selfish inclinations, and fail to observe the simple laws of justice, mercy and service. Such are some of the peculiar moral and religious ideals.

156. **General Conceptions.** When the whole period is surveyed three impressions are made: (1) That the period has contributed much to the total of their knowledge of religion. They certainly had a well-defined religious system, but did not bring it with them from Egypt. The whole of the system is written in permanent form, and all the future must look back to Sinai where during this period they received their wonderful

ritual. (2) That there are still imperfections in their religious thinking. Some of these imperfections may be put down as follows: (a) They seemed still to believe in a multiplicity of deities. Certainly they regarded Jehovah as superior to all other gods, but the fact that they frequently turned aside and worshiped others indicated that they counted them real. (b) They appear to have considered the purity demanded as a basis of approach to deity as physical rather than moral (Lev. 7: 20, 21; 22: 1-9). (c) They did not think that other nations had any part in the care or providence of Jehovah. This conception of him as exclusively theirs results both from believing in the reality of other deities and in Jehovah's special manifestations and covenant promises to them. (d) There was no effective consciousness of a future life. They appeared to consider the present world as the only sphere of moral government, and hence to them the rewards which Jehovah promised for faithfulness to his commands were considered as temporal. (e) They neglected the tabernacle at Shiloh. During much of this period, certainly during the last portion of it, they seemed to have no connection with this sacred place where Jehovah was supposed to dwell. (3) That they do know more of the fundamental matters of religion. (a) They had a better understanding of sin and its consequences. They had learned that wrong-doing not only deprived them of Jehovah's favor, but subjected them to severe suffering. (b) They knew better how to have their sins removed—by an atonement through death and blood.

CHAPTER IV

THE HEBREW KINGDOM

(1 Sam. 8—2 Sam. end; 1 and 2 K.; 1 Chron. 10–2 Chron. end).

From the Beginning of the Kingdom to the Captivity of Judah

INTRODUCTORY

157. **General Statement.** We come now to another change in national affairs. With the inauguration of Saul as the first king (1 Sam. 11-15), a new period opens. It extends to the captivity (587 B.C.) and is called the period of the Israelite Kingdom. After the reign of three kings the kingdom was divided, but was still regarded as one, though in two parts. During the period it was ruled by kings, and hence is sometimes named the period of Regal Administration. The king, however, was not a despot, but was regarded as the executive of a theocratic government.

158. **Sources of Information.** Much may be learned elsewhere concerning this period especially from the messages of the prophets each of which will be studied in the proper place, but the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles are our chief sources of information and hence are briefly described here.

(1) **The Books of Samuel.** The two books of Samuel were originally one book called the "First Book of Kings" just as the two books of Kings were one book called "Second Kings." The four books form a continuous story and record the rise, glory and fall of the Jewish Monarchy. After the story of the birth and childhood of Samuel already studied, First Samuel tells of Saul's

elevation to the throne and of his final downfall. In connection with this story we are told of the growing power of David who was to succeed Saul as king. Second Samuel tells the story of the career of David while he was king of Israel and shows how with all his faults he found favor with God and founded a royal line that ended in Christ who is King over all. The books fall into seven divisions. (1) Career of Samuel, 1 Sam. Chs. 1-7. (2) Career of Saul to his rejection, 2 Sam. Chs. 8-15. (3) Career of Saul after his rejection, 1 Sam. Chs. 16-31. (4) David becomes king and reigns in glory, 2 Sam. Chs. 1-10. (5) David's great sin and its consequences, 2 Sam. Chs. 11-18. (6) David restored to his throne, 2 Sam. Chs. 19, 20. (7) An appendix, 2 Sam. Chs. 21-24.

(2) **The Books of Kings.** They take up the history of Israel where Second Samuel left off and give the account of the death of David, the reign of Solomon, the Divided Kingdom, and the captivity. The political changes of Israel are given in order to show the religious condition. Everywhere there is a conflict between faith and unbelief, between the worship of Jehovah and the worship of Baal. We see wicked kings who introduce false worship and righteous kings who bring about reforms and try to overthrow false worship. Israel yields to evil and is finally cut off, but Judah repents and is restored to perpetuate the kingdom and to be the medium through which Jesus came. This religious purpose is further emphasized by the large place given to the biographies of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. It is also indicated in the punishment of the nation's sin in God allowing Israel to be taken captive by Assyria which marked the end of the northern tribes and in Judah's captivity and seventy years suffering in Babylonia and restored only after bitter repentance. The outline of these books has the following seven points: (1) The reign of Solomon, 1 Kings, Chs. 1-11. (2) The revolt and sin of the twelve tribes, 1 Kings, Chs. 12-16. (3) The reign of Ahab and career of Elijah, 1 Kings, Chs. 17-22. (4) The last days of Elijah and career of Elisha, 2 Kings, Chs. 1-8. (5) The dynasty of Jehu, 2 Kings, Chs. 9-14. (6) The fall of Israel, 2 Kings, Chs. 15-17. (7) The Kingdom of Judah, 2 Kings, Chs. 18-25.

(3) **The Books of Chronicles.** From Genesis to the end of the Second Book of Kings the books have followed one after the other and formed a continuous history. But in Chronicles we double back and review the whole history, beginning with Adam and coming down to the edict of Cyrus which permitted the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem. It is a sort of rewriting of the whole history of Israel down to the return from captivity. Several things indicate that these books are permeated with a religious purpose. They give a very conspicuous place to God's care of his people and his purpose to save them. Special emphasis is put upon the building of the temple and the religious institutions and practices centered in it. They also give large place to those kings who served God and destroyed idols. It is also shown by following the Messianic line of Judah and David and only mentioning Israel where it seemed necessary. Still again it is indicated by the way the priestly spirit permeates these books instead of the prophetic element as in the earlier historical books. The aim, therefore, seems to be to teach rather than to narrate. He seems to teach that virtue and vice, in private or in national affairs, will surely receive their dues—that God must be taken into account in the life of individuals and of nations.

The following outline will aid the student in reading these books: (1) The genealogies, 1 Chron. Chs. 1-9. (2) The reign of David, 1 Chron. Chs. 10-29. (3) The building and dedication of the temple, 2 Chron. Chs. 1-7. (4) Solomon's greatness, 2 Chron. Chs. 8, 9. (5) Reign of Rehoboam and victory of Ahijah, 2 Chron. Chs. 10-13. (6) Reign of Asa and Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. Chs. 14-28. (7) Reign of Hezekiah and Amon, 2 Chron. Ch. 33. (8) Reign of Josiah and the captivity, 2 Chron. Chs. 34-36.

159. **Israel's Lapses into Idolatry.** Israel was guilty of a series of lapses into idolatry. (1) They came from an idolatrous ancestry (Gen. 31: 19; 35: 2; Josh. 24: 2, 14). Abraham broke away from it, but through marriage it entered again into the family, and probably left some traces of its influence. (2) While in Egypt they were deeply affected by the idolatry of the land. This probably led them so soon to commit their sin in reference to the golden calf. Even at the close of

the sufferings of the wilderness they were not cured of this evil, and Joshua urged them to put away their false gods (Josh. 24: 14). (3) They were contaminated in Canaan. Here they met religions that were of the most debasing character. The licentious features of the religion of Carthage, Greece and Rome were all drawn from Canaan. Failing to obey the command of God to utterly destroy the Canaanites they were subjected to the danger of their religion and often yielded to it, and, as a punishment, were brought into bondage to other and cruel nations. These lapses and oppressions taught them the need of a better bond of union, that all of them might act in harmony, and that no single tribe might endanger the life of all. When the period closed they did have a fine type of family religion (1 Sam. 1: 3, 9, 18, 24-28; 2: 18-20, 9-14, 22-24; 20: 6, 29), which was an active and powerful force and did much in the way of preparing them for the new period.

160. **Demand for a King.** Several things, no doubt, influenced the tribes to ask that they be united into a monarchy with a ruling king. (1) From the days of Joshua there had been no strong national bond. They were only held together by the law of Moses and the annual assemblage at Shiloh. But the wise reign of Samuel had given them an enlarged national consciousness and led to a desire for a stable government with the largest possible national unity. (2) The failure of the sons of Samuel who had been entrusted with some power and who would naturally succeed him, led them to feel that other provision for the welfare of the nation must be made before the death of Samuel, or ruin would come. (3) The attitude of the nations around Israel suggested the need of a strong government, headed by a leader of authority. The new organization seemed necessary as a national protection against the Philistines and Ammonites, who had already made incursions into their land and threatened at any time to further oppress them. (4) The faith of Jehovah was threatened. The victories of the Philistines would be interpreted to mean that Jehovah was powerless, or else did not care for his people. This would lead them to turn to other gods. It was, therefore, a religious

crisis that made it essential that the Hebrews unite, and in the name of Jehovah overthrow the Philistines and establish a nation that would rightly represent to all nations Jehovah as the God of their race. (5) The nations around them, such as Egypt and Assyria, with their seats of royalty and their strength in war, had excited their pride and they were moved with a desire to be like their heathen neighbors.

161. **Principles of the Kingdom.** This desire for a king cut Samuel to the heart. He thought it manifested disloyalty to Jehovah and involved a rejection of him as their Sovereign. But he was instructed of God to yield, and, with his usual fine submission, he took the step that set himself aside and established the monarchy. Their folly did not lie in their asking for a king, but in the spirit of forgetfulness of God with which they made the request. Indeed, Moses had provided for a kingdom and had given the law upon which the king was to rule (Deut. 17: 14-20). He was to be unlike other kings, and was not to rule according to his own will, or that of the people, but according to the will of Jehovah. He was to be subject to God as was the humblest Israelite, and, under his immediate direction, was to rule for the good of the people. This was a new principle that showed itself in all the future history of Israel. Saul attempted to be like others—to assert his own will—and disobeyed God and was deposed, while David identified himself with God and his purposes and was successful. One represents the ideal of the people, the other that of God.

162. **Life of the People.** A glance at the facts of this section indicates that a great change had taken place in the life of the people. Their intercourse with other nations had introduced many new customs. There was a great increase of wealth, but it was created in a way that made the rich richer and the poor poorer. There was a large growth in the number of those living in the city, and a corresponding growth in the evils of luxury and licentiousness. Commerce was extended and with it came many vices. Life became more and more complex, and slavery and all the sins characteristic of an age of worldly show and magnificence were in-

dulged. And the fact that it was necessary to employ from Hiram of Tyre workmen to build the temple and mariners to make their vessels shows that the Hebrew culture had not supplied skilled artisans or sailors. The proverbs have in them many allusions and warnings that would not have been applicable unless the moral maxims of the fathers were in danger, and the evils of wealth, the temptations of commerce, and the snares of sensuality and self-indulgence were being felt. The prevalence of sooth-saying or fortune-telling, which persisted through the period, showed a low standard of intellectual attainment, as well as a degraded religious life. It was a counterfeit of the wonderful privilege of the Jews to know the mind and will of Jehovah. Those who would not seek, or, because of their sins, could not find that genuine coin, resorted to the counterfeit. All of these conditions showed that the life of the people was far from ideal.

163. **Literature of the Period.** This is the period of greatest literary advancement among the Hebrews. During the reign of David and Solomon, extraordinary literary gifts were manifested. The Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon are illustrations of their fine attainments in this field. Here also is the development of the written prophecies. Those whose prophecies fall within this period are Amos, Hosea, Joel, Jonah, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Zephaniah and Habakkuk. Here then are fourteen books that are to be considered in connection with the history of this period.

SECTION I. THE UNITED KINGDOM—THREE KINGS

164. **Election of the King.** The ascension of Saul to the position of king was a gradual process and was completed in four stages. (1) He was privately anointed. This came as the outcome of a visit which he made to Samuel, the prophet, when on search for his father's asses. (2) He was publicly elected. Soon after the pri-

vate anointing Samuel called a national assembly at Mizpah and had him elected as king. But some did not want him, and he quietly waited for a chance to win royal recognition by some noble deed. (3) He defeated the Ammonites. Not long after his election the Ammonites threatened the destruction of Jabesh-Gilead and Saul mustered three hundred thousand men from among the tribes and suddenly fell upon them and destroyed them. (4) He was crowned at Gilgal. The victory he had so unselfishly won in behalf of Jabesh-Gilead put an end to all opposition, and he was crowned king of all the tribes.

165. **Saul's Strength and Weakness.** He began his career under the most auspicious circumstances. He was a man of courage and enthusiasm and was able to command the obedience of all their rival factions. He was a man of wealth and influence, but his tribe was in the midway between the north and south, and was of such little importance among them as to prevent any jealousy on the part of the stronger tribes. He had a fine physical appearance, and yet in the early days, he charms us with his modesty. Samuel supported him with his influence and the people gave him allegiance, and he was for a while subservient to the will of God and greatly prospered. But later he became self-willed and acted as if the nation were his instead of God's. He developed a spirit of disobedience, perverseness and evil conduct that marked him as insane. He disregarded both the rights of men and the laws of God. Because he thus resisted the Spirit of God he was rejected by the Lord and allowed to reap the fruit of his own way and to fail.

166. **His Great Achievements.** The summary of his work given in 14: 47-52 shows that his reign was full of activity. He bore himself as a sort of chieftain, and was a rough-and-ready democratic sovereign. He at once dealt with the oppressions of Israel's enemies and was successful in the following campaigns: (1) Against the Ammonites (I Sam. 11) in which he delivered from ruin the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead on the east of the Jordan, and won the love of all the Hebrew people. (2) Against the Philistines (1 Sam. 13-14) who had

disarmed the Israelites and were fast riveting their fetters on them. The memorable event of this war was his victory at Michmash. Jonathan and his armor-bearer climbed up some cliffs and made a sudden attack on the Philistines and threw them into confusion. Saul followed up this advantage and drove them panic-stricken out of the territory. It was a genuine campaign for freedom and was eminently successful. Before the battle he disobeyed the will of God by performing the duties of a priest and was told that he should lose his kingdom. At the close of the campaign he proposed to kill Jonathan, his son, the hero of the day, because he had unwittingly disobeyed a foolish command, but was prevented by the people. (3) Against Moab, Ammon, Edom and Zobah (1 Sam. 14: 47), of which there are no particulars given. (4) Against the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15) in which he disobeyed God in not wholly destroying all Amalek and his possessions, and lost the help and influence of Samuel. It was after this battle that David was anointed to become king and Saul's decline began.

167. **His Decline.** From chapter 16 on the narrative tells of the rapid decline of Saul and of the rise of David to the kingship. (1) There is given the story of the madness of Saul and the introduction of David to the court as the king's musician. (2) The campaign against the Philistines in which David killed Goliath and won great honor from the king. (3) His effort to destroy David. On account of sickness, or other cause, he seems to have had fits of insanity and, through bitter jealousy and insane hatred, tried for many years to kill David, whom God always delivered out of his hand. (4) His last battle and death. The Philistines arrayed themselves against Saul who tried to get in touch with Samuel. In this act he abandoned God and turned to the witch of Endor to learn his fortunes in the impending battle. He finally met a death in harmony with his life, and thus ended one of the most melancholy careers of all history (1 Chron. 10: 13-14).

168. **Character and Significance of His Reign.** Saul was not a builder of cities, not a political organizer, not a patron of literature, and not a promoter of religion.

But he did much to challenge our admiration, and deserves a higher place in the roll of Old Testament heroes than we are accustomed to give him. Besides the successful military campaigns discussed above, there are several other vital matters which are impressive. (1) The simplicity of his court. He kept back from throne and palace that wave of oriental luxury which later engulfed Israel. (2) He gave the people that high and democratic ideal of the kingship which was always their defense against possible oppression. (3) His order that all witchcraft and similar arts, universally practiced in that day, must cease in his realm, shows him to have had advanced thoughts along religious lines. (4) He had to blaze the way, while kings that followed had the advantage of the results of his reign, and, when comparing his accomplishments with those of later kings, we must remember that he was pioneering. David was in a better position than we are to estimate Saul's worth, and his lament at the news of Saul's death was evidently sincere. This elegy is a poem whose artistic beauty is unsurpassed. In it he calls on all the nation to lament; suggests that it is horrible to exult over the fall of so great a man and calls all nations, especially Gilboa where he fell, to join in universal grief. He praises the prowess, the courage and the virtues of Saul and Jonathan, and reminds the women of Israel of the great service which Saul has rendered for them. Such a statement cannot fail to impress us with the greatness of Saul. On the whole, one feels that at his worst he was only a victim of a mental disorder which wrecked his career, and at times made him an irresponsible despot instead of the noble and generous chieftain of his earlier years.

169. **David's Youth.** David's early life has in it several things of interest. (1) His childhood. He came of noble parentage, being the son of Jesse, and the great grandson of Ruth and Boaz, who was of the tribe of Judah, whom Jacob's patriarchal blessing had designated as the royal tribe (Gen. 49: 8-12). He was born at Bethlehem, a greatly loved city, which was later made forever sacred by the birth of Jesus there. (2) His occupation. He was a shepherd. This honorable occupation re-

quired courage and watchfulness and disciplined him in enduring hardships. That he had all these qualities is indicated by the fact that in defense of his flock on one occasion he slew a bear, and on another, a lion. Many of his psalms breathe the spirit and experiences of this shepherd life. (3) His private anointing (1 Sam. 16: 2-13). After Saul's rejection God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse at Bethlehem to anoint one of his sons for king. After arriving it was necessary for him to quiet the fear of the Bethlehemites before he could perform his errand. Here God showed Samuel that physical stature was not the chief qualification for responsible tasks, and directed him to David who had the necessary qualities of heart. The anointing was a private affair, and its full meaning may not have been understood by the family. (4) The killing of Goliath. The Philistines again arrayed themselves against Israel, and when their armies were near each other, a giant of the Philistines for forty days defied Israel. About this time David came to the camp to see about his brethren who were in Saul's army and accepted the giant's challenge and killed him. This incident had three valuable results for David. (a) It won for him the love of Jonathan, Saul's son. (b) It won him the love and praises of the people, as seen in the song of the women. (c) It caused him to be made a member of Saul's military household.

170. **His Experiences at the Court of Saul.** (1) He became Saul's musician. Soon after he was anointed for king God's spirit left Saul and an evil spirit possessed him. David was now chosen as a court musician in the hope that his gentle strains might drive away that evil spirit. (2) He suffered because of Saul's jealousy. After he slew the giant Saul who knew he was rejected, and who by this time probably suspected that David was destined for the kingship, became insanely jealous of him. Two different times he threw his javelin at David, but he escaped unharmed. Saul also promised David Merab, his daughter, for a wife, but when the time came he gave her to another. Through all this David behaved himself modestly and clearly tried to do right. (3) He held the confidence and love of

Jonathan who made a covenant with him, defended him before his father, and when it became necessary aided him in his escape. (4) The significance of this court experience. God was preparing him to be a king. His experience as a shepherd had given him physical strength and courage and skill for the contests he would afterward have with men; at Saul's court he gained knowledge of the affairs of the state and an acquaintance with the men who were shaping the affairs of the nation, as well as with the real needs of the nation. In the course of his career there he was able to win the favor of all classes. He also learned the military tactics and equipment of his day, and how to direct or lead great companies of men. All of this prepared him for his success later.

171. **David an Outlaw Chieftain.** After leaving the court of Saul David spent several years as an outlaw, continually hunted by Saul, and betrayed by the people whom he had befriended. (1) He went first to Nob, where the priest fed him and gave him the armor of Goliath. (2) He went on to Gath, the home of Goliath, the giant, whom he had slain. Here he was discovered, and, only after feigning madness, escaped. (3) He hid in the cave of Adullam where he gathered around him a group of men, and became their leader in a sort of bandit warfare. (4) Saul hunted him from place to place with a purpose to kill him. Twice David had him in his power, but, out of reverence for him as God's anointed, refused to kill Saul. Such magnanimity has rarely been exhibited among men. (5) He again went back to the land of Philistia and was kindly treated. While there, however, another war arose between Saul and the Philistines. Achish, the Philistine king, wanted him to join in the campaign against his own brethren. But their jealousy, lest he might prove traitor, released him from this embarrassing dilemma. (6) Finally, Saul's defeat and death prepared the way for him to return home and become king.

172. **His Reign over Judah—at Hebron.** (1) General statement. One naturally asks what kind of king will this outlaw make? Will he seek vengeance upon his personal foes and try to enrich himself or not? He has

already shown that he is magnanimous toward those who have injured him. He now showed kindness to the men of Jabesh-Gilead who were kind enough to give Saul an honorable burial. He executed an Amalekite who sought a reward for slaying Saul. He composed a tender elegy to Saul and Jonathan. (2) The reign at Hebron. The first part of his reign was over Judah, with the capital at Hebron, and lasted seven and one-half years. During this period Ishbosheth, son of Saul, reigned over Israel in the North. It is probable that both of these kings were regarded as vassals of the Philistines and paid tribute. There was constant warfare between these two rival kings, but the kingdom of Judah gradually gained the ascendancy—"David waxed stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker" (2 Sam. 3: 1). Seeing this, Abner undertook negotiations looking to the union of the two kingdoms, but was treacherously killed by Joab. This act of Abner in coming to David was, in reality, one of secession, and was soon followed by the murder of Ishbosheth and the utter failure of Saul's kingdom.

173. **His Reign Over all Israel.** Saul's kingdom having fallen, Israel assembled in great numbers at Hebron and asked David to become king over all the nation. Immediately upon this the Philistines sent an army into the Hebrew country and the bitterness of the wars that followed is seen in that, at one time, David was forced to take refuge in the cave of Adullam and carry on a sort of guerilla warfare. But finally, in the valley of Rephaim, he struck such a crushing blow to the Philistines as to compel a lasting peace, and leave him free to develop his kingdom. His reign over all Israel lasted thirty-three years and was the ideal reign of all the history of the Hebrews. It falls into two distinct parts. (1) A time of growing power. He changed the capital to Jebus, or Jerusalem, and brought the Ark up there. By conquering the Philistines, Moabites, Edomites, Ammonites and Syrians he enlarged his borders in every direction and became master of all the territory from Egypt to the Euphrates. He also made a covenant of alliance with Hiram, king of Phoenicia, who became his

life-long friend. (2) A time of decline. David was great in war and in civic organization, but he was not above temptation. And having begun a course of sin, his whole career was darkened with domestic and with internal troubles, and his reign ended in a cloud.

174. **Elements of His Success.** The elements of success and the chief acts in David's reign may be summed up as follows: (1) Making Jerusalem his capital. In choosing this old Canaanite stronghold, called Jebus, that had resisted all attacks from the days of Joshua, as capital he showed great wisdom. (2) His foreign relations. David's foreign policy was one of conquest. He not only defended Israel, but subdued other nations. In his time such a policy would give great strength. It would win the loyalty of his own subjects and compel the respect of others. (3) His home relations and policies. (a) His policy at home may be said to be one of centralization. One of his first acts was to bring up the Ark and place it on Mount Zion and to center all worship there. This would tend to unite the people and to make more powerful his authority over all of them. In line with this plan he gathered materials and stored riches with which the temple would later be built. (b) He acted with a wise consideration for the rights of his subjects, and in every way sought to promote their happiness. He did not oppress his subjects with heavy taxes, nor despoil them of their possessions, nor seize them for soldiers against their will. He recognized that the king was for the people and not the people for the king. (c) He knew how to use other strong men to aid in carrying forward his plans, and in this added great strength to his kingdom. The extent of this organization is indicated in 2 Sam. 8: 16-18; 15: 37; 16: 16; 20: 23-26; 1 Chron. 27: 33. (d) He made vast internal improvements. He built up the industrial interests of the kingdom, introduced the ornamental arts, built storehouses and castles, and enlarged and fortified Jerusalem that it, as the "City of David," might become the pride of the nation. (4) It was a literary reign. David himself wrote many of the Psalms, and some of them are the very finest poems in the Bible. Others also wrote poems, and there were other forms

of literature. (5) It was a religious reign. David was a deeply religious man, and is especially distinguished from the other kings by his faith in God and his loyalty and gratitude to him. So outstanding was his religious element that all future kings are eulogized or condemned with the statement, "He walked in the ways of David," or "He walked not in the ways of David." In his righteous reign, showing kindness to enemies as well as to friends, he furnishes the finest illustration of Jesus who is to reign in righteousness over all the world.

175. **His Great Sin and its Bitter Consequences.** (1) His sin. David's high ideals and noble chivalry could not withstand the enervating influence of his growing harem. The degrading influence of polygamy with its luxury, pleasure-seeking and jealousies was soon to undermine his character. His sins and weak indulgencies were destined to work family and national disaster. These sins reached a climax in his trespass with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. In this crime he fell from his exalted position of a righteous and religious ruler to the level of an unprincipled eastern monarch. It stands out as one of the darkest crimes of all history, including deceit, murder, adultery, and several other crimes, and "shows what terrible remnants of sin there are in the hearts even of converted men." Primitive society followed the course of nature in condemning adultery which was his chief offense as worthy of more severe punishment than murder itself. (2) Consequences of it. The bitter consequences of this sin soon became apparent. Nathan brought him a worthy rebuke. And he showed himself different from other kings of his time by the bitter repentance with which he bewails his sin, but its evil consequences in his family and nation could not be removed. The nature of his chastisement is suggested in the following incidents: (a) The death of his child born to Bathsheba. (b) Amnon, his oldest son, one of the pitiable products of his oriental harem, shamefully treated his sister, Tamar, in the gratification of his brutal lusts. (c) Absalom treacherously murdered Amnon as a matter of revenge for the outrage upon his sister, Tamar. (d) The rebellion of

Absalom, his son, which almost cost David the throne and led to the destruction of Absalom. (e) The rebellion of Sheba and following events which almost destroyed the empire. (f) Many incidents in the family and kingdom of Solomon, his son, which were cruel and sinful. The message of his awful and inexcusable sin is supremely applicable to our present age in which the social evil threatens to undermine our boasted Christian civilization.

176. **Inspiring Career of David.** The life of David is so varied and beautiful that one finds difficulty in outlining any study of him in the space allowed here. But he may be studied: (1) As a shepherd lad, where he laid the great foundations of his great career. (2) As a servant at the court of Saul, where he became the object of a bitter jealousy and suffered great indignities, as well as learned things necessary to his future duties as king. (3) As a fugitive from Saul, during which time he exhibited his unwillingness to do wrong, even against one who was doing him great injustice. (4) As a friend, especially shown in his relation to Jonathan. By it he was influenced throughout his whole career, and was caused after becoming king to extend kindness to the house of Saul, his enemy. (2 Sam. Ch. 9). (5) As a musician. His accomplishments in this field are witnessed both by his ability in the use of the harp causing him to be chosen to play before Saul, and in the great body of psalms which he left us. (6) As a loyal subject. In no other place perhaps did he show more fine qualities than in this. To him Saul was God's appointed, and, though wronged by him, and though himself already anointed to be king in his stead, he remained perfectly loyal to Saul as king. (7) As a ruler. He knew how to govern both his own people and those whom he had subdued. He also succeeded in forming friendly alliances with other kings, and changed the enfeebled and divided tribes into a mighty empire. (8) As a military leader. He organized a most successful army (1 Chron. 27: 1-5; 2 Sam. 23: 8-9) and defeated at least five surrounding nations, and so impressed the great world powers beyond that they did not oppose the growth of his kingdom. (9) As a servant of God.

Though making his mistakes, he was a "man after God's own heart." He made Jerusalem the great center of religion, and organized the priests and Levites so that their work could be done effectively and with order. The key-note of his life seems to have been expressed to Goliath (1 Sam. 17: 45). (10) As a type of Christ. His life and experiences are of special interest to the Christian because he is, of all Old Testament characters, the most eminent type of Jesus.

177. **His Last Days and Dying Instructions.** The last days of David are made sad because of his own weakness. The memory of his guilt and disgrace had led him to withdraw more and more from the public life and, therefore, to neglect the duties of judge and ruler. His court became the scene of plotting concerning his successor, whose name he had apparently not announced. It was only by the valuable help of Nathan that he succeeded in having his wish in the matter.

The dying words of David have in them much that is prophetic of the Messiah, and point out to Solomon, his beloved son, who was to reign in his stead, the way of all success and blessing. This message however, contains what has been designated as "the greatest blot on David's character"—his charge to Solomon to put to death Shimei and Joab. Such vindictiveness does not seem to comport with his spirit manifested in the sparing of Saul in the days of Saul's jealous hatred, and in his kindness to the house of Saul (2 Sam. Ch. 9). Nor does it comport with his patience formerly shown to Shimei (2 Sam. 16: 5-13). We cannot explain these charges of hatred upon any other grounds than that of an old man in his dotage. He is "no longer his manful self."

178. **Solomon's Accession to the Throne.** David being but the second king, and himself not a descendant of the former king, the law of succession had not been well established. According to the earliest traditions the chieftain was tribal leader, but could not project his authority beyond his own life. They were accustomed to call the most able men to rule among them. Two elements in deciding who should rule were that he should be nominated by the dying chief, or king, and that his choice should be accepted by the people. It

seemed, however, to be considered natural for the oldest son to take the lead after the death of the father, and on this ground perhaps, Adonijah sought to take possession of the throne. This plot was overcome by the timely interference of Nathan, the prophet, Zadok, the priest, and Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. They brought the matter to the attention of David, who immediately had Solomon whose name means "pacific" anointed, and led the people to acclaim him king. He was then given final instructions from David, and upon David's death, took the throne.

179. **Solomon's Official Career.** In studying Solomon's official career three things are of special interest. (1) His capacity for rule. It took but little time after he came to the throne to demonstrate that he was born to rule. He took no action with reference to the men who had conspired against him until it was clear that they were not only disloyal at heart, but were planning treason. Then with quick action he slew three leaders who questioned his right to the throne, and another who disobeyed his command. By these swift blows he put an end to all hints of rebellion. He was known far and wide for his culture and for his cleverness in literature. and these graces, added to his other qualities, made it clear that he was capable to lead the people. (2) The organization of his kingdom. Solomon did much to perfect the organization which David left. He divided the whole kingdom into twelve divisions and required that each section care for the expenses of the government one month each year. He added other officers and created elaborate machinery for collecting the tax that was needed for the government. He also carried further the organization by treaties with other nations, part of which were secured by inter-marriage. (3) The source of all this ability and success is found in the story of his sacrifice at Gibeon, and God's proposal and promise. He sought wisdom for the noble purpose of rightly serving Israel, and God gave him this, and added the wealth and splendor which he achieved.

180. **Solomon's Policies.** As a ruler it is easy to think of his policies under three heads. (1) His home policy. This was one of absolutism. He became a despot and

robbed the people of their freedom, and put them under a yoke of oppression by imposing upon them heavy burdens of tax that he might carry out his unholy plans for selfish indulgence. He so completely absorbed their time and energy in these plans that no time was left for the development of personal or private interests. The contrast between his palace and the humble mud and stone house of his subjects was bound to bring discontent. (2) His foreign policy. This was a policy of diplomacy. By means of inter-marriage, the establishment of commercial relations, and by the adoption of the customs and religions of other nations he bound them in friendly alliance. (3) His religious policy. This was a policy of concentration. He built the temple, and through the splendor of its worship, tried to concentrate all worship upon Mount Moriah. This desire may also have contributed to his erection of altars to foreign deities. By erecting such altars and temples there the different peoples would believe their gods dwelt there and would fear to attack his capital, lest they be found to fight against their gods.

All these policies were prompted by a passion for imperialism. But they led to his own religious deterioration and weakened, instead of strengthened, the loyalty of his liberty-loving subjects. Whatever his motives or reasons, he produced a condition causing the most of his subjects to be impatient for his death.

181. **Solomon's Building Enterprise.** (1) The Temple. The greatest of all his building accomplishments was the Temple. According to the most modern computation the precious materials, such as gold, with which it was embellished, alone amounted to something like six hundred million dollars. The preparation to build it, the placing of the Ark in it and the great ceremony with which its completion was celebrated all indicate the place of importance attached to it. (2) The palace. Next in importance was his palace which in size and time of construction surpassed that of the temple. This palace consisted of several halls, the chief of which were: the Forest of Lebanon, the Hall of Pillars, and the Hall of Judgment. Near the palace was the residence of the king himself and his Egyptian queen, a

house that would compare well with the royal palaces of her native land. Indeed all Moriah and the ground about its base was covered with immense structures. (3) Other buildings. Solomon undertook various other great building enterprises. He built many great cities, the most famous of which were Tadmor or Palmyra and Baalath or Baalbic. The former, built at an oasis of the Syrian desert, seems to have been a sort of trade emporium for the traders of Syria and the Euphrates to exchange wares with the merchants of Egypt. The latter was near Lebanon and was chiefly notable for its temple of the sun, which was one of the finest edifices of Syria.

It would be difficult to put too high a value upon the influence wrought by these vast building enterprises. It can hardly be doubted that the building of the temple was the most important single event of the period of the United Kingdom. From this time on Israel ceased to look back to Sinai and regarded Jerusalem as the dwelling place of Jehovah. Its priesthood and services became the support of the coming kings. The prophets proclaimed their mortal messages from its sacred precincts, and through it was nurtured the pure religion of Jehovah.

182. **Solomon's Apostasy.** While Solomon did not sink to the low level of some kings, his later years did not meet the expectancy of his youth. (1) He violated the law which Moses had given to govern kings (Deut. 17: 14-20). This he did in three ways. (a) By his dependence upon military equipment (1 Kgs. 10: 26). (b) By creating a great harem of a thousand wives who contributed largely to his undoing. (c) By great wealth, which he could not gain without oppressing the people. (2) He had other gods besides Jehovah. As an old man, "his wives turned away his heart after other gods." These two violations proved to weaken the kingdom and brought upon his house the judgment of God, and the signs of discontent began to appear.

183. **Evidences of National Decay.** From the brief Biblical narratives it is evident that the nation began to disintegrate before the death of Solomon. Among the more apparent signs of decay were several revolts:

(1) That of Hadad, the Edomite, who threw off the Hebrew yoke and ruled a part of Edom independently. (2) That of Adad, the Midianite, who defied the authority of Solomon. (3) That of Rezon, the Aramean, who revolted and became master of Damascus around which grew up an important kingdom. (4) That of Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, who was an officer of Solomon at Jerusalem and, while unsuccessful, showed the existence of a deep-seated discontent in Jerusalem itself. It is significant that the prophet, Ahijah, of Shiloh, encouraged Jeroboam by telling him that, on account of the idolatry fostered by Solomon, ten tribes would be removed from Solomon's son and committed to him. This indicated that he and other leaders disapproved Solomon's policies as untrue to Jehovah and that the prophets saw that disunion alone would preserve the liberties and pure religion of Israel.

184. **Nations Surrounding Israel.** The life of any people is always influenced by the nations around them. During this period Israel had intercourse with many other nations. (1) Phoenicia. This commercial people, through Hiram of Tyre, one of its kings, supplied the cedar wood and the skilled laborers who made possible the building of the Temple. (2) Egypt. Solomon married a daughter of Pharaoh and carried on with Egypt an extensive commerce, and for his wife's sake, no doubt, introduced the worship of Egyptian gods. (3) Assyria. This country, as well as Egypt, had lost much of her former power, and was not in a position to antagonize Solomon. (4) Among the other nations with which Solomon had dealings may be mentioned Sheba, thought to be in the most southern part of Arabia, Ophir and Tarshish, and from the nature of articles purchased and the three years required for the voyage, he is thought to have sent trading vessels to India.

185. **The Riddle of Solomon's Character.** Few Biblical characters manifested such contradictory elements of character. Early in life he manifested an earnest, conscientious and religious spirit. He was prayerful and sought above all else wisdom, that he might be able to rule well. He built the temple and his prayers

at its dedication were not only humble and fervent, but were expressive of the very highest loyalty to Jehovah, as the one supreme God, and to all the high purposes of the divine will in Israel. But in spite of all this he crushed the people with heavy burdens of taxation, trampled under foot the democratic ideals of the nation, and adopted the policy of oriental despots, which tended to make free-born citizens mere slaves of the king. He lived a life of basest self-indulgence and depended upon foreign alliances rather than upon Jehovah to save his nation. He married many strange wives and, through them, established in Israel the worship of strange gods (1 Kings 11: 1-8). On the whole his reign destroyed what had been accomplished by David, and proved disastrous. Although counted the wisest, he proved to be in many ways the most foolish king that ever ruled over Israel.

186. **The Rise of the Prophets.** This is the period of the permanent establishment of the prophetic office. Moses and Joshua were prophets of God and stood alone as his spokesmen to the people. From Joshua to Samuel no prophet is named, but with Samuel and the establishment of the monarchy the era of the great prophets begins and continues almost to the end of the Old Testament. Samuel as prophet was more important than Saul, the king, and great as was David, he was continually advised and warned and rebuked by prophets. They do not seem to have played quite so important a part in the life of Solomon, but one, Ahijah of Shiloh, appeared in the latter part of his career. The prophets of the period are Samuel, Gad (1 Sam. 22: 5; 2 Sam. 24: 11), Nathan (2 Sam. 7: 2-17; 12: 1-12; 1 Kgs. 1: 8-24), Iddo (2 Chron. 9: 29; 12: 15; 13: 22), and Ahijah (1 Kgs. 11: 29-39; 2 Chron. 9: 29). None of their teachings remains to us except the parable of Nathan, and here and there a mere fragment.

187. **Literary Productions.** This period is marked by great advancement in literary culture. Both David and Solomon possessed a high order of literary gifts and as writers exerted a large influence on their own and all future time. One book, the Psalms, is so Davidic in its nature that it is spoken of as his, while three books,

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon are attributed either to Solomon or to the time of his reign. These four books are therefore studied here.

(1) **The Psalms.** The Hebrew word means praise or hymns, while the Greek word means psalms. The prevailing note is one of praise, though some are sad and plaintive while others are philosophical. It has been called the heart of the entire Bible, but its relation to the Old Testament is especially intimate. All divine manifestations are viewed in regard to their bearing on the inner experience. History is interpreted in the light of a passion for truth and righteousness and as showing forth the nearness of our relation to God.

Of the 150 Psalms, there is no means of determining the authorship of 50. The authors named for others are David, Asaph, the sons of Korah, Hermon, Ethan, Moses and Solomon. Of the 100 whose authorship is indicated, David is credited with 73, and in the New Testament he alone is referred to as the author of them. Luke 20: 42.

It is very difficult to make any sort of classification of the Psalms for any classification is open to criticism. For this reason many groupings have been suggested. The following, taken from different sources, may be of help: (1) Hymns of praise, 8, 18, 19, 104, 145, 147, and so forth. (2) National hymns, 105, 106, 114, and so forth. (3) Temple hymns or hymns for public worship, 15, 24, 87, and so forth. (4) Hymns relating to trial and calamity, 9, 22, 55, 56, 109, and so forth. (5) Messianic Psalms, 2, 16, 40, 72, 110, and so forth. (6) Hymns of general religious character, 89, 90, 91, 121, 127, and so forth.

The following classification has been given in the hope of suggesting the most prominent religious characteristics of the Psalms: (1) Those that recognize the one infinite, all-wise and omnipotent God. (2) Those showing abhorrence of all idols and the rejection of all subordinate deities. (3) Those who recognize the universality of God's love and providence and goodness. (4) Those giving prophetic glimpses of the divine Son and of his redeeming work on earth. (5) Those showing the terrible nature of sin, the divine hatred of it and the judgment of God upon sinners. (6) Those teaching the doctrines of forgiveness, divine mercy and the duty of repentance. (7) Those emphasize the beauty of holiness,

the importance of faith, and the soul's privilege of communion with God. There are five divisions of the book. (1) Davidic Psalms, ascribed to him and reflecting his life and faith, 1-41. (2) Historical Psalms, ascribed to several authors and full of historical facts, 42-72. (3) Liturgical, or Ritualistic Psalms, ascribed mainly to Asaph especially prescribed for worship though strongly historical, 73-89. (4) Other Pre-captivity Psalms, reflecting much of the pre-captivity sentiment and history, one by Moses (Psalm 90), ten anonymous and the rest David's, 90-106. (5) Psalms of captivity and return, having to do with incidents of these periods, 107-150.

(2) **Proverbs.** Some of the proverbs were written by Solomon, some were collected by him from the sayings of others and some were added by men of later times. But they are studied here because Solomon gave the proverb its highest perfection and established its place in literature. The proverb emphasizes the external religious life. They do not tell much about how to be saved but rather tell how a saved person should conduct his life. They teach how to practice religion and overcome the daily temptations. They express a belief in God and his rule over the universe and, therefore, seek to make his religion the controlling motive in life and conduct. They breathe a profound religious spirit and a lofty religious conception, but put most stress upon the doing of religion in all the relations of life. In them there is a voice of wisdom which speaks words of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, prudence, subtility, instruction, discretion and the fear of Jehovah, and furnishes us with good advice for every condition of life. There is also a voice of folly, which speaks words of folly, simplicity, stupidity, ignorance, brutishness and villainy, and lifts her voice wherever wisdom speaks. Wisdom is contrasted with folly, which often issues in simplicity and scorning. Wisdom is personified, as if it were God speaking about the practical, moral, intellectual and religious duties of men. Christ finds himself in the book, Luke 24: 27, and if Christ be substituted for wisdom, where it is found, a new and wonderful power will be seen in the book. The book falls easily into six divisions. (1) The praise of wisdom, Chs. 1-9. (2) Practical proverbs of Solomon, 10: 1—22: 16. (3) Words

of the wise, 22: 17-24 end. (4) Proverbs of Solomon, copied by the scribes of Hezekiah, Chs. 25-29. (5) Words of Agur, Ch. 30. (6) Words of Lemuel, Ch. 31.

(3) **Ecclesiastes.** The Hebrew word means preacher and refers to or signifies one who calls together and addresses assemblies. Such expressions as "I perceived," "I said in my heart," "I saw," and so forth, indicate that it is not the will of God that is developed but a man is telling of his own ventures and utter failure. The general view of key-phrase is "under the sun," with the sad refrain, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity," and shows how a man under the best possible conditions sought for joy and peace, trying at its best every human resource. He had the best that could be gotten, from human wisdom, from wealth, from worldly pleasure, from worldly honor, only to find that all was "vanity and vexation of spirit." It is what a man, with the knowledge of a holy God, and that he will bring all into judgment, has learned of the emptiness of things "under the sun" and of the whole duty of man to "fear God and keep his commandments." The purpose, then, is not to express the doubts or skepticism of the writer, not to record the complaining of a bitter spirit. It is not the story of a pessimist or of an evil man turned moralist. But it is intended to show that, if one should realize all the aims, hopes and aspirations of life, they would not bring satisfaction to the heart. His experience is used to show the result of successful worldliness and self-gratification in contrast with the outcome of the higher wisdom of the Godly life. We are shown that man was not made for this world alone and not for selfish achievement or gratification, but to fulfil some great plan of God for him which he will accomplish through obedience and divine service. The analysis consists of only four points. (1) The vanities of life, Chs. 1-4. (2) Practical wisdom, Chs. 5-7. (3) Rules for a happy life, Chs. 8-11. (4) Conclusion of the whole matter, Ch. 12.

(4) **Song of Solomon.** It is called Canticles or Song of Songs which is Solomon's, so called perhaps because of its great beauty. The subject is faithful love, seen in a woman who though subjected to the temptations of an oriental court, remains faithful to her old lover. She, a country girl of the north, attracts the attention of the

king who brings her to Jerusalem and offers her every inducement to become the wife of the king. But upon final refusal she is allowed to return home to her lover, a country shepherd lad. It is part dialog and part monolog. Their love on both sides is expressed in that sensuous way common among the oriental peoples. Many of the allusions give rise to the belief that it was written to celebrate the nuptials of Solomon and the daughter of Pharaoh. It is a very important book though difficult of interpretation. To the Jews of that time it was a call to purity of life, for a return to those relations which God had ordained between man and woman. It was a protest against polygamy which had become almost universal. Indeed, they regarded it as setting forth the whole history of Israel. To the Christian it sets forth in allegory, Christ and his church as Bridegroom and Bride and the fullness of love which unites the believer and his Saviour. To all the world there is shown the purity and constancy of a woman's love and devotion to her ideals. It furnishes an ideal which, if properly held up, would cast out of human society all those monstrous practices that come from unworthy ideals. There are four divisions forming an outline for the book. (1) The king's first attempt to win the virgin's love, 1: 2—2: 7. (2) The king's second effort to win her love, 2: 8—5: 8. (3) The king's third attempt to win her, 5: 9—8: 4. (4) The triumph of the maiden, 8: 5-14.

188. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) Those drawn from the reign of Saul. (a) God adapts his methods to the needs and conditions of the people—from tribal government to kingdom. (b) A man out of harmony with God will certainly fail—Saul. (c) A man in harmony with God's plan will succeed, no matter how much opposed by others—David. (d) God never forgets to punish those who oppress his people—Amalekites. (e) The success of God's work does not depend upon our attitude toward his will, but our condition when it has succeeded does. (f) A righteous man can succeed without doing wrong to do it—David. (g) God's anointed will suffer, if they sin. (2) Those drawn from the reign of David. (a) Divine appointment to a great task does not guarantee one against falling into evil—David com-

mitted great sin. (b) Luxury and the indulgence of the appetites tend to degradation.—David broke down in his moral life. (c) The personal forgiveness of sin does not remove its evil consequences—David was forgiven, but the results of his sin remained. (d) Our sins are often more harmful to others than to ourselves—as David sinned, his family suffered. (e) Righteousness exalteth a nation. (f) God controls the issue of wars. (3) Those drawn from Solomon's reign. (a) All national methods bring disaster, if God is left out of account. (b) Material progress is absolutely of no value without a spiritual life. (c) National prosperity always endangers the nation. (d) The wisest and best of men may go wrong, if they subject themselves to evil influences. (e) Temples, or houses of worship, are of value in giving dignity to faith and in preserving the spirit of worship. (f) If the common people feel that they are unjustly treated nothing will prevent the disintegration of the nation. (g) Religion that does not issue in proper ethics will suffer at the hands of true ethics. (h) The security of society depends upon simple justice.

189. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The story of Jonathan's exploits at Michmash, the danger to his life and his escape, 1 Sam. 14. (2) Saul's appeal to Samuel through the witch, 1 Sam. Ch. 28. (3) Saul's last battle and death, 1 Sam. Ch. 31. (4) David's choice and anointing, 1 Sam. 16: 1-13. (5) David's wanderings, 1 Sam. 21: 10—22: 5. (6) The location and importance of the several nations conquered by David, how the victories were won, and particularly Jebus. (7) David's plans to build the temple and God's message to him, 2 Sam. Ch. 7. (8) The death of the child of Uriah's wife, 2 Sam. 12: 15-23. (9) The rebellion of Sheba, 2 Sam. 20: 1-22. (10) Nathan's parable to David, 2 Sam. 12: 1-15. (11) Compare the stories of the accessions of Saul and David and Solomon—note differences in the methods of accession and the characters of the three at the beginning of their reigns. (12) Look for the different conceptions of God found in the period. (13) Kindness to enemies—David to Saul. (14) The strength of true friendship—Jonathan and David.

SECTION II. THE TWO KINGDOMS TO THE FALL OF ISRAEL

190. **Sources of Information.** While much information concerning this period may be found elsewhere, notably in the discourses of the prophets, the books of Kings and Chronicles are the principal sources of the history of the divided monarchy. (1) The books of Kings. These books pursue the story from where Samuel closes to the time of the captivity of Judah. The writer wholly ignores, or gives but a passing notice to, many events that modern historians would consider quite important. The matters he does record, together with the way in which he passes judgment upon the several kings as good or bad, make it clear that his interests are only given to show religious conditions. Everywhere he presents a conflict between faith and unbelief, between the worship of Jehovah and the worship of Baal. Israel yields to evil and is cut off, while Judah repents and is preserved and becomes the medium through which Jesus should come. This religious purpose is further emphasized by the large place given to the biographies of the prophets, Elijah and Elisha. (2) The book of Chronicles. Up to this time the books have fitted into each other and formed a continuous history. Here we double back and review the whole history, beginning with Adam and coming down to the edict of Cyrus, which permitted the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem. Several things show these books to have a religious purpose. (a) God's care of his people and his purpose to save them is given special emphasis. (b) The building of the temple and the religious institutions and practices centered in it are made prominent. (c) The kings who served God and destroyed idols are assigned the most conspicuous place. (d) He follows the line of Judah, only mentioning Israel where it seems necessary, and thereby gives the Messianic line through David. (e) The priestly spirit permeated these books instead of the prophetic element seen in earlier historical books. This is an ecclesiastical history, and aims to teach rather than to narrate. He seems to teach that virtue and vice, in private or in national affairs, will surely receive their dues—that God must be

taken into account in the life of individuals and of nations.

191. **Causes of the Division.** Several things must be set down as contributory causes of the division of the nation. (1) There was an old jealousy between the tribes of the north and south, reaching as far back as the time of the Judges. The very difference in the northern and southern territories and in their products tended to keep alive a rivalry between them. (2) During the time of Solomon the people had turned away from Jehovah and engaged in the idolatrous worship of other gods, especially those of the Zidonians and Moabites, and Ahijah, the prophet had foretold the division (1 Kgs. 11: 29-39). This weakening of the people's faithfulness to God gave place for the manifestation of their former jealousy. (3) Solomon had put upon the people heavy burdens of taxation and of forced labor, which were fast taking away the people's liberties and reducing them to serfdom. This policy inflamed the jealousy of the northern tribes into a bitter discontent because they counted it disloyal to God to give up their liberties. (4) The ambition of Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim, a valiant officer of Solomon, no doubt, led him to stir up the ten tribes to revolt. Ahijah, the prophet, had made known to him that upon the death of Solomon he should become the head of these tribes. (5) The final and immediate cause was the foolish course of Rehoboam. The northern tribes demanded that he should relieve them of the heavy burdens laid on them by Solomon. Influenced by unwise advisers he answered them with a threat of even severer burdens. Incensed by this foolish threat, the ten tribes revolted and enthroned Jeroboam as their king, and the division of the empire was accomplished.

192. **Relation of the Two Kingdoms and Effects of the Division.** The bearing of the two kingdoms toward each other underwent frequent change. (1) There were about sixty years of almost constant war between them. During this time the kings of Judah cherished the hope that they would regain their control over the ten tribes. (2) There was a period of close alliance which was sealed by an intermarriage between the fam-

ilies of Ahab, king of Israel, and Jehosaphat, king of Judah. The purpose seems to have been that they might better resist the encroaching power of Assyria. (3) There was a fresh manifestation of hatred. Jehu was enthroned in Israel and destroyed the house of Ahab, and forever shattered the alliance between the two nations. (4) Through the long drawn-out wars they both grew gradually weaker until in 722 B.C. the northern was overcome by the Assyrians, and in 587 Judah was carried captive by the Babylonians. The story of the political ruin that befell them unfolds to us new visions of the character and demands of Jehovah. The great ethical and spiritual principles upon which the nations rested are revealed. They suffered great afflictions and were the victims of much injustice and greed, and at last became the champions of ethical righteousness. They lost their national and political ambitions, but found the eternal God and spiritual joys far more satisfying than all material honors and success.

193. **Comparison of the Two Kingdoms.** Each kingdom had its advantages and its disadvantages. Israel was the pioneering, progressive, experimenting nation, while Judah was conservative and watchful. The following will indicate more in particular their differences. (1) The northern kingdom from the material point of view was far superior to the southern. It had a larger and more fertile country, three times as many people, and a much better military equipment. Ramah, Bethel and Gilgal with their schools of the prophets, Shechem with its wealth of memories, and Shiloh, the early home of the tabernacle, were all in their borders. Their country was also the scene of greatest prophetic activity and their cause was just. But the kings were inferior and wicked, not a single one of the nineteen being Godly, and "each dynasty began in a bloody revolution, only to be itself blotted out in blood." They established idolatrous and abominable worship, and this idolatry counterbalanced all their material advantages. (2) The Southern Kingdom was far superior from a spiritual point of view. It possessed the religious capital of the nation with the Temple as a center of Jehovah worship. True, it had only one-third as many people, one-fifth

as much territory and that less fertile, and an inferior military equipment; but its superior spiritual power and its superior line of kings made it last 135 years longer than the northern kingdom.

194. **The Kings of the Northern Kingdom.**

1. Jeroboam (1 Kings 12: 20—14: 20). Reigned 22 years and died.
2. Nadab (1 Kings 15: 25-27). Reigned two years and was slain.
3. Baasha (1 Kings 15: 27—16: 6). Reigned 24 years and died.
4. Elah (1 Kings 16: 6-10). Reigned two years and was slain.
5. Zimri (1 Kings 16: 11-20). Reigned 7 days and suicided.
6. Omri (1 Kings 16: 21-28). Reigned 12 years and died.
7. Ahab (1 Kings 16; 29—22: 40). Reigned 22 years and was slain in battle.
8. Ahaziah (1 Kings 22: 51—2 Kings 1: 18). Reigned 2 years and died from an accident.
9. Jehoram (2 Kings 3: 1—9: 24). Reigned 12 years and was slain.
10. Jehu (2 Kings 9: 1—10: 36). Reigned 28 years and died.
11. Jehoahaz (2 Kings 13: 1-9). Reigned 17 years and died.
12. Jehoash (2 Kings 13: 10—14: 16). Reigned 16 years and died.
13. Jeroboam (2 Kings 14: 23-29). Reigned 41 years and died.
14. Zechariah (2 Kings 15: 8-10). Reigned 6 months and was slain.
15. Shallum (2 Kings 15: 13, 14). Reigned 1 month and was slain.
16. Menahem (2 Kings 15: 17-22). Reigned 10 years and died.
17. Pekahiah (2 Kings 15: 23-26). Reigned 2 years and was slain.
18. Pekah (2 Kings 15: 27—16: 9). Reigned 20 years and was slain.
19. Hoshea (2 Kings 17: 1-6). Reigned 9 years and was put in prison.

195. **The Kings of Judah.**

1. Rehoboam (1 Kings 12: 21-24—14: 21-31; 2 Chron. 11: 1—12: 16). Reigned 17 years and died.
2. Abijah (1 Kings 15: 1-8; 2 Chron. 13: 1-22). Reigned 3 years and died.
3. Asa (1 Kings 15: 9-24; 2 Chron. 14: 1—16: 14). Reigned 41 years and died.
4. Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 15: 24—22: 41-50; 2 Kings 3: 1-27; 2 Chron. 17: 1—21: 1). Reigned 25 years and died.
5. Jehoram (2 Kings 8: 16-24; 2 Chron. 21: 1-20). Reigned 8 years and died.
6. Ahaziah (2 Kings 8: 25-29—9: 27-29; 2 Chron. 22: 1-9). Reigned 1 year and was killed by order of Jehu.
7. Athaliah (2 Kings 11: 1-20; 2 Chron. 22: 10—23: 6). Reigned 6 years and was slain when Joash became king.
8. Joash (2 Kings 11: 21—12: 21; 2 Chron. 24: 1-27). Reigned 40 years and was slain.
9. Amaziah (2 Kings 14: 1-20; 2 Chron. 25: 1-28). Reigned 29 years and was slain.
10. Uzziah or Azariah (2 Kings 14: 21-25; 2 Chron. 26: 1-23). Reigned 52 years and died.
11. Jotham (2 Kings 15: 32-36; 2 Chron. 27: 1-9). Reigned 16 years and died.
12. Ahaz (2 Kings 16: 1-20; 2 Chron. 28: 1-27). Reigned 16 years and died.

196. **Principal Events in the History of Israel.** The following are perhaps the most important events in the history of the northern kingdom during this time. (1) The establishment of royal sanctuaries of idol worship at Dan and Bethel for the purpose of counteracting the temple worship at Jerusalem. (2) The removal of the capital by Omri from Tirzah to the hill site of Samaria. His splendid reign marks a new epoch, and raised the northern kingdom to a position of power that it had not enjoyed before. (3) The wicked reign of Ahab who introduced Baal worship into Israel, and aroused much resentment among the people by adopting the wicked practices of idolatry. (4) The reformations of

Jehu, who swept Baal worship from the land and overthrew the hated dynasty of Omri. A series of disasters prepared the way for this, and Jehu seems to have been led along, or influenced, by the prophets. (5) The successful reign of Jeroboam II, who brought the nation back to a state of prosperity that resembled the time of David and Solomon. He extended their territory, revived their commerce, developed their natural resources, and created a prosperity and its consequent evils that called forth the prophecy of Amos and Hosea. (6) The activity of the prophets during the entire period. This activity is seen in the important place given (1 Kings. 17—2 Kings 13) to the work of Elijah and Elisha; in the prophecy of Jonah, Amos and Hosea, who prophesied in the time of the reign of Jeroboam II; and in part in the work of Micah who preached during the reign of Hoshea. (7) The conquest of Israel by the Assyrians, which came as the result of forty years of constant decline following the death of Jeroboam II.

197. **Principal Events in the History of Judah.** The principal events in the history of Judah from the division of the kingdom to the captivity of Israel are: (1) The foolish answer of Rehoboam to the ten tribes which led to their revolt and the continual enmity of the northern and southern kingdoms that followed. (2) The invasion of Judah five years after the death of Solomon by Shishak of Egypt, who greatly weakened the nation. (3) The reign of Jehoshaphat, whose judicial, military, and educational and religious reforms introduced a new and good day in Judah, and whose unhappy alliance with Ahab led his son who followed him as king to introduce idolatry into Judah with all the evil of the reign of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah. (4) The prosperous reign of Uzziah, who was contemporary with Jeroboam II of Israel, and the consequent material lapses. (5) The apostasy under Ahaz who encouraged Baal worship and practiced great cruelty even on the members of his own family. The prophet Isaiah (Chs. 7-9) appeals to Ahaz and to the people to return to Jehovah, Micah also prophesied during this time.

198. **Conquest of Israel by the Assyrians.** During the entire period Israel was invaded, or threatened by four invasions, by the Assyrians. (1) By Shalmaneser II, to whom Jehu paid tribute. This is not mentioned in the Scripture, but is described in the monuments. (2) By Tiglath-pileser (whose Babylonian name was Pul, 2 Kings 15: 19) to whom Menahem paid enormous tribute (2 Kings 15: 19-20). (3) By Tiglath-pileser IV during the reign of Pekah (2 Kings 15: 29). (4) By Shalmaneser IV. Hoshea, whom Tiglath-pileser had left as king, rebelled and refused to pay tribute, and Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, determined upon the destruction of Samaria. By invading the territory he shut up Hoshea and his army. They were enabled to hold it three years, during which time Shalmaneser died and Samaria fell under the leadership of Sargon II, his successor, 722 B. C. Sargon states that in one of his inscriptions relating to Samaria that he carried into exile 27,290 inhabitants. These, no doubt, represented the leaders of Israel—those who would most probably lead a rebellion. But the greater part of the Israelites were left, and according to the Biblical narrative, colonists were brought from the Assyrian Empire to take place in Samaria of the Israelites that had been deported. From this time forward the northern kingdom ceased to be an independent people.

To protect themselves from the wild beasts that soon filled the depopulated sections of Samaria all the newcomers sought to worship Jehovah, "the God of the land," and secured a Hebrew priest to teach them this divine religion. For a while, therefore, the Hebrews seemed to assimilate these strangers from Assyria. But soon, through union of the blood of the Hebrews with their new neighbors, a new race called Samaritans was produced. Under the protection of Assyria they prospered, while Judah, in the south, was often nearly crushed by her enemies. They have persisted through all the ages, a few still living at the ancient city of Shechem. They were bitterly hated, by the southern kingdom, whose people would have nothing to do with them, even in Christ's times (John 4: 9).

199. **Israel's Contribution to the World.** While the northern kingdom lasted, it was greater and far more aggressive than Judah, both in its good and bad tendencies. The two hundred years of her separate existence were among the most important in the religious history of the race. They had a freer and more democratic atmosphere than that found in the South. It furnished great social, political and religious problems that called forth some of the greatest Hebrew prophets. The work and teachings of these prophets added much to the faith of mankind. We are given through them such commanding personalities as Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, and Jonah. Through it all, we are impressed that the worship of other gods was the cause of their downfall. It produced such moral and religious and social disorders and abuses as to convince the world of the justice of their severe judgment, and also to warn it against turning away from Jehovah.

200. **Non-writing Prophets.** Already we have noticed the rise of the prophets, the schools for their training and the firm establishment of prophetic orders during the time of the united monarchy. Because some of the kings were unfaithful to the worship of Jehovah, there arose a conflict between the religious and political parties. It reached its climax during the reign of Ahab, whose wife, Jezebel, introduced all the evils of the worship of Baal. This crisis called forth Elijah and Elisha, the two greatest non-writing prophets who carried on a bold and fearless struggle against false worship, and finally succeeded in driving it out of Israel and in overthrowing the wicked dynasty which introduced it. The most important events of the inspiring career of these two non-writing prophets may be put down as follows.

(1) **Elijah.** His work was done under most discouraging circumstances, but accomplished much good in the way of arresting, though not averting, the destruction of the northern kingdom. Living in the midst of corruption, and constantly opposed and persecuted, he was of necessity a man of stern and rigid character. The outstanding events in his life are: (a) His prophecy of a famine and support by the ravens (1 Kings 17:

1-7). (b) His miracles of increasing the widow's meal and oil and of raising the widow's son (1 Kings 17: 8-24). (c) His meeting with Ahab, resulting in a contest with 850 false prophets whom he destroyed, and in sending rain upon the land (1 Kings Ch. 18). (d) His flight from Jezebel, the divine revelations of God to him on Mount Horeb, and the call of Elisha (1 Kings Ch. 19). (e) His announcement of the doom of Ahab for his sin against Naboth (1 Kings 21: 17-29). (f) His prediction of Ahaziah's death and the death of the men sent against him by Ahaziah (2 Kings 1: 1-18). (g) His translation, and the reception and first use of his mantle and spirit by Elisha (2 Kings 2: 1-18).

(2) **Elisha.** While less rugged, and, therefore, more lovable as a man than Elijah, Elisha was little, if any, less powerful. The more important events connected with his life are: (a) The dividing of the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 2: 14). (b) He healed the waters of Jericho (2 Kings 2: 19-22). (c) Children were destroyed who mocked him (2 Kings 2: 23-25). (d) He performed six miracles during the reign of Jehoram (2 Kings 4: 1—6: 7). These six are: first, he increased a widow's pot of oil that she might sell of it and pay her debts; second, he raised from the dead the son of the Shunamite; third, he miraculously destroyed the poison that had gotten into their pottage; fourth, he fed a hundred men with twenty loaves of barley; fifth, he cured Naaman of leprosy, and, as a judgment, smote his servant, Gehazi, with it; sixth, he made the ax that had fallen into the water to swim. (e) He defeated the plans of Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, by leading away his army which first had been miraculously stricken with blindness (2 Kings 6: 8-23). (f) He foretold the death of Ben-hadad, and the destruction of the cities of Israel by Hazael, who would reign in his stead (2 Kings 8: 7-15). (g) His last sickness, during which he prophesied that King Jehoash would overthrow Syria. (h) His death (2 Kings 13: 14-21). In all this one is especially impressed with the large element of the miraculous that enters into his career.

201. **Study of the Prophets.** In the study of the messages of the prophets we are to keep in mind that the

term prophet may be: (1) One employed in public discourse very much as a preacher of to-day. (2) One who performed the function of a scribe; as such, they compiled and wrote large portions of the Old Testament. (3) One who can foretell and discern future events. In this capacity he is called a seer. The first is the most common use of the term—the smallest portion of the messages of the prophets being of the predictive type. In the study of the books of the prophets the student should hold in mind that the prophet deals primarily with the moral and religious condition of his own people at the time of his ministry. His denunciations, warnings and exhortations are, therefore, not abstract principles, but are local and for Israel. The prophet was then first of all a Jewish patriot and revivalist, filled with the Holy Ghost and zeal for Israel. He spoke as would any good preacher in an effort to correct existing evils, to promote worthy enterprises or to hearten and help those in distress or need. The interpretation of prophecy should generally be in the literal and natural meaning of the words. The following passages will show how it has been usually fulfilled literally, and not allegorically: Gen. 15: 13-16; 16: 11, 12; Deut. 28: 62-67; Psa. 22: 1, 7, 8, 15-18; Isa. 7: 14; 53: 2-9; Hos. 3: 4; Joel 2: 28, 29; Mic. 5: 2; Acts 2: 16-18; Matt. 21: 4, 5; Luke 1: 20, 31; Acts 1: 5; Matt. 2: 4-6; Luke 21: 16, 17, 24; Acts 21: 10, 11.

The predictive elements must be interpreted with two things in view: (a) A nearby or local fulfillment, such as of the dispersion and restoration. (b) A far off and greater fulfillment of which the first is only the forerunner, such as the advent of the Messiah and his glorious reign over the whole earth. A prophecy might have its first or nearby fulfillment in the joy of the period of the restoration of the Jews, and its far off and higher fulfillment in the complete restoration of all things in Christ. Here study Amos, Hosea, Joel and Jonah.

202. **Writing Prophets.** Here for the first time we come upon the messages of those prophets whose discourses are preserved for us in the Bible. From this time forward these messages form a large part of the

biblical record. Four of these prophetic messages, those of Amos, Hosea, Joel and Jonah belong to this period. Each of them saw the sinfulness of the nation and especially its religious corruption and cried out against it. They realized that Israel's defeat by the Assyrians was not due to the weakness of Jehovah, their God, but to their sins. They emphasized the different characteristics of God such as justice and love as they saw would be helpful in meeting the needs of the people.

(1) **Amos and His Message.** (1) His name means "Burden," and he is called the prophet of righteousness. His home was at Tekoa, a small town of Judea about twelve miles south of Jerusalem, where he acted as herdsman and as dresser of sycamore trees. He was very humble, not being of the prophetic line, nor educated in the schools of the prophets for the prophetic office. God called him to go out from Judah, his native country, as a prophet to Israel, the Northern Kingdom. In obedience to this call he went to Bethel, where the sanctuary was, and delivered his bold prophecy. His bold preaching against the land of Israel while at Bethel aroused Amaziah the leading idolatrous priest, who complained of him to the king. He was expelled from the kingdom, after he had denounced Amaziah who had perhaps accused him of preaching as a trade, 7: 1-14, but we know nothing more of him except what is in this book, which he perhaps wrote after he returned from Tekoa. (2) The time of the prophecy. It was during the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah and of Jeroboam II, king of Israel, and was outwardly a very prosperous time in Northern Israel. But social evils were everywhere manifest, especially the sins that grow out of a separation between the rich and poor, 2: 6-8, and so forth. Religion was of a low and formal kind, very much of the heathen worship having been adopted. (3) The significance of the prophecy. One need but read the book of Amos to see that he expects doom to come upon foreign nations, that he foretells the wickedness of the Jews and their coming doom, showing how the nation is to be dissolved and sold into captivity and that he predicts the glory and greatness of the Messianic Kingdom. He thinks of Jehovah as the one true God, an all-wise, all-powerful, omnipresent, merciful and

righteous person whose favor can only be secured by a life of righteousness. He sees that justice between men is the foundation of society, that men are responsible for the acts, that punishment will follow failure to measure up to our responsibility, that worship is an insult to God, unless the worshiper tries to conform to divine demands. Four points in the outline of the book will help in reading the book. (1) The condemnation of the nations, Chs. 1, 2. (2) The condemnation of Israel, Chs. 3-6. (3) Five visions concerning Israel, 7: 1—9: 10. (4) Promised restoration and the Messianic Kingdom, 9: 11-15.

(2) **Hosea and His Message.** Hosea whose name means deliverance is called the prophet of divine love. He was a native and citizen of Israel and followed Amos whom he may have heard at Bethel. He was contemporary with Isaiah and bore faithful testimony to corrupt Israel in the north while Isaiah prophesied at Jerusalem and was to Israel what Jeremiah became to Judah. He was prepared for his work through the lessons which he learned from the sins of his unfaithful wife. Through the suffering which he endured because of her sins in going astray after other men, he understood how God was grieved at the wickedness of Israel and how her sins were not only against God's law but an insult to divine love. In love and at great cost he restored his wayward wife and in that act saw a hope of the restoration and forgiveness of Israel, and was led to preach to the nation the need of sincere repentance before God. His ministry extended over more than sixty years and was perhaps the longest of any on record. It continued from 786-726 B.C., covering the last few years of the reign of Jeroboam II, to which Chs. 1-3 belong and the period of anarchy following. His style is "abrupt, uneven, inelegant," but also poetical, figurative and abounding in metaphors. His writings must be interpreted with great care to get what is meant by his symbolic speech. He reminds one of modern reformers and revivalists. Through all the anger which the book reveals we see also the surpassing beauty of reconciling love. One sees everywhere that the supreme goal to which Hosea moves is the re-establishment of Israel's fellowship of life and love with Jehovah.

It is important in understanding the prophecy that we understand the condition of Israel. Outwardly there was prosperity. Syria and Moab had been conquered; commerce had greatly increased; the borders of the land had been extended and the temple offerings were ample. Inwardly there was decay. Gross immoralities were being introduced; worship was being polluted and the masses of the people crushed, while the Assyrian Empire was advancing and ready to crush Israel, whom, because of her sins, God had abandoned to her fate.

They countenanced oppression, murder, lying, stealing, swearing, and so forth. They had forgotten the law and their covenant to keep it and had substituted the worship of Baal for that of Jehovah, thereby becoming idolators. They no longer looked to God in their distress but turned to Egypt and Assyria for help, and thereby put security and prosperity on a basis of human strength and wisdom instead of resting them upon a hope of divine favor. The book falls into the following divisions. (1) Hosea's evil wife and their children, Ch. 1. (2) The evil wife a picture of Israel's unfaithfulness and return to God, Ch. 2. (3) God's love restores Israel as Hosea does his wife, Ch. 3. (4) Israel's sin, Chs. 4-8. (5) Israel's coming punishment, Chs. 9-11. (6) Israel's repentance and restoration, Chs. 12-14.

(3) **Joel and His Message.** His name means "Jehovah is God," but his birthplace and conditions of life are unknown. He very probably prophesied in Judah (2: 15-17) and the time of his ministry is commonly thought to have been during the reign of Joash, king of Israel, and Amaziah, king of Judah. It seems certain that his is one of the earliest (some think the very earliest) of the prophetic books, and his references to the temple and its services have caused some to conclude he was a priest. The occasion of the prophecy was four successive plagues of insects, particularly the locusts (2: 25) and a drouth (2: 23) which had been unprecedented. These calamities the prophet declares are the results of their sins and should call them to repentance, that God may bless instead of curse their land. The people repent and the calamity is removed. This is used by the prophet to foreshadow the coming destruction and restoration of Israel and this restoration is also doubtless used to

prefigure the Christian church and its triumph on earth. The great subject is the terrible judgments of God which were to come upon the people because of their sins. His great distinctive prophecy is 2: 28-32 which was fulfilled on the day of pentecost, Acts 2: 16-21. In it all, he is emphasizing the rewards of the righteous and certain punishment of the wicked and thus he appealed to both the hopes and the fears of men. But the chief value of the book is its optimism. There was victory ahead, the righteous would finally triumph and be saved and God's enemies be destroyed. The conflict of good and evil and of Israel and her enemies will end in entire and glorious triumph for Israel and right. There are two divisions of the book. (1) The call to repentance, 1: 1—2: 17. (2) Israel's repentance and Jehovah's promised blessing, 2: 18—3: 21 end.

(4) **Jonah and His Message.** He was of the ten tribes, a son of Amittai and dwelt in Gathhepher, a city of Zebulun. He is first mentioned in 2 Kings 14-28, where he prophesied the success of Jeroboam II, in his war with Syria by which he would restore the territory that other nations had wrested from Israel. He very likely prophesied at an early date, though all attempts to determine the time and place of his death have failed. The book differs from all other books of prophecy in that it is more a "history" of prophecy than prophecy itself. All the others are taken up chiefly with prophetic utterances, while this book records the experiences and work of Jonah, but tells us little of his utterances. The story of Jonah has been compared to those of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17-19, and 2 Kings 4-6). It was not intended primarily to inform us about the prophet Jonah but to teach great spiritual truths. Although full of the miraculous element, the evident purpose is to teach great moral and spiritual lessons, and it is unfortunate that its supernatural element has made this book the subject of infidel attack. But the facts, though extraordinary, are in no way contradictory or inconsistent. Christ endorsed the story and we should keep our hearts open to the great moral and spiritual truth which it is intended to teach rather than to its miraculous element. It is the most Christian book in the Old Testament and gives particular emphasis to the universality of the plan of

redemption. Nowhere else in the Old Testament is so much stress laid on the love of God for the whole race. It aimed to show the Jews that in their selfishness they had forgotten that he was anxious for all men to repent so that he could save them. It is a call to worldwide missions and shows that those who know the Saviour and his divine love are obligated to bear the message to all others. We should keep three points in view as we read it. (1) Jonah's first call and flight from duty, Chs. 1, 2. (2) Jonah's second call and preaching in Nineveh, Ch. 3. (3) Jonah's anger and God's mercy, Ch. 4.

203. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) Jehovah rules, not only over Israel, but over all peoples. (2) Each nation is, therefore, responsible to God according as it has opportunity and enlightenment. (3) God judges men according to their acts and motives and not according to their religious creeds and ceremonies. (4) Though Jehovah is merciful, he will and must finally punish wilful and continuous evil doers. (5) Sin is spiritual adultery, or infidelity to God, and brings cruel pain to his heart. (6) All punishment administered to the sinful is for the purpose of leading them to repentance, so that they may be forgiven. (7) Jehovah loves men and is not satisfied unless they love him in return. (8) Repentance is the only way of escape from the evil consequences of our sins. (9) God seeks to save men and nations from the sins that are destined to destroy them. (10) Public office and wealth are a sacred trust and their selfish, or criminal, misuse will bring the swift judgment of God upon the offender. (11) Justice and mercy are the two laws that should govern man's dealings with his fellows. (12) Deeds of love and justice are the essential and only genuine evidence of true religion.

204. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The story of each king in each nation. Here learn: (a) How he came to the throne. (b) The character of the king and the chief acts of his reign. (c) The hostile and friendly nations and individuals with whom he had to deal. (d) The length of his reign and how it ended. (2) The wickedness of Jezebel, and her influence and power. (3) The place and power of Elijah and Elisha in the

story. (4) The place of God in the story—his power in shaping the course of things.

SECTION III. JUDAH THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM

205. **Judah and David's Influence.** The fall of the city of Samaria to the king of Assyria put an end to the kingdom of Israel and closed the period of the divided kingdom. It led the little kingdom of Judah to take unto herself "the whole national spirit." Her history illustrates the lasting influence of one great man. David's reign had furnished an ideal reign and kingdom and all the prophetic hopes and instincts of the nation gathered about him and his line. Judah lasted 135 years after the fall of Israel, and it is noteworthy that through her entire history of more than 350 years she was reigned over by nineteen kings and one queen, all of them belonging to the dynasty of David. This period begins in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah, the thirteenth king.

206. **Judah's Advantages Over Israel.** Judah had several advantages over Israel, some of which have already been mentioned, that contributed to her continuance for 135 years after Israel's destruction. These advantages may be summed up as follows: (1) Her seclusion, which made her difficult to reach by foreign invaders. (2) Her non-fertility of soil. It was for the most part poor and rocky and yielded only enough for a bare subsistence, and that only as a result of the most arduous labor. This developed hardy, earnest and courageous men, who loved her rocky hills and were slow to give up their customs and religion. Moreover, the mass of the people were free from the enervating influence of wealth. (3) Her national unity. There was perfect unity of population and interests. She was bound together by the closest natural bonds and formed a social unit that was little torn by invasions. (4) Her centralized government in Jerusalem. She had an hereditary dynasty that possessed all the prestige and influence of the name of David. She enjoyed all the benefits of the cumulative power that comes from an uninterrupted succession of kings. (5) The centralized

worship in the Temple. Religion was always a bond of union in the nation. But the Temple in Jerusalem, with its splendid equipment and elaborate services, commanded the reverence and homage of all the people of Judah, and was a potent factor for their union. Moreover, it tended to prevent their going into idolatry and bringing upon themselves the wrath of Jehovah.

207. **The Kings of the Period.**

13. Hezekiah (2 Kings 18: 1—20: 21; 2 Chron. 29: 1—32: 33). Reigned 29 years and died.
14. Manasseh (2 Kings 21: 1-18; 2 Chron. 33: 1-20). Reigned 55 years and died.
15. Amon (2 Kings 21: 19-26; 2 Chron. 33: 20-25). Reigned 2 years and was slain by a conspiracy of his servants.
16. Josiah (2 Kings 22: 1-23; 2 Chron. 34: 1—25: 27). Reigned 31 years and was killed in battle.
17. Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23: 30-34; 2 Chron. 36: 1-4). Reigned 3 months and was dethroned and carried into Egypt where he died.
18. Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23: 34—24: 6; 2 Chron. 36: 4-8). Reigned 11 years and died.
19. Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24: 6-16; 2 Chron. 36: 9, 10). Reigned 3 months and was carried captive into Babylon.
20. Zedekiah (2 Kings 24: 17—25: 30; 2 Chron. 36: 11-21). Reigned 11 years and was carried captive into Babylon.

208. **Wealth, Luxury and Intellectual Culture.** The discourses of the prophets indicate that there was abounding wealth, but that the masses of the people were very poor. The reigning and influential classes lived in luxury and indulged in all the follies of the idle rich, and showed the usual heartlessness toward the poor. There were houses "of hewn stone," "winter houses," "summer houses," and "houses of ivory," "beds of ivory," and luxurious "couches." They anointed themselves with "chief ointments" at the time for feasts. The following list of Scriptures will indicate some of the things which they possessed: Amos 5: 11; Jer. 22: 14; Isa. 5: 11, 12; 3: 18-23; 21: 7. There are also some

traces of intellectual culture. Isaiah speaks of "the counsellor and the cunning artificer and the eloquent orator" as if there was a regular class of them. Amos speaks of "the seven stars and Orion" as if they were familiar to the people. We do not overlook the evidence of low intelligence found in such practices as that of witchcraft; but the very body of literature that has to do with the time indicates an intellectual culture.

209. **Crimes of Judah's Leaders and God's Judgment Upon Them.** Selfishness and greed and class pride entrenched themselves behind wealth and the ruling classes. There were no doubt petty criminals, but Isaiah especially directed most of his warnings and denunciations against great criminals, against men of position, culture, and wealth, the pillars of society and the champions of religion. He pointed out several of their sins: (1) The evils of land monopoly. He saw how great estates, built up as they were would turn aside the rewards of labor and the common gifts of nature. (2) The baneful effects of selfish luxury and debauchery. These were ruining the political and economic life of the people. (3) The tendency to skepticism. Contrary to their former life and teaching they were now foolishly defying Jehovah to punish them. (4) The sophists of the day, who deliberately perverted the sense of justice until crime passed for virtue and honesty and justice and mercy were derided. (5) The loss of the true conception of life. They were wise in their own eyes and were not renowned for national service, but for mixing drinks, for corrupting tribunals and for wronging the poor and innocent. Even the women, especially of the rich and ruling classes, had lost all sense of pity and love, and were consumed with an ambition to make a show of beauty. (6) The false trust of the people. They were putting their confidence in magic and divination and in strong treasures and armies. Such a nation was certain to come to grief. The story of this destruction is described in chapters 5, 9, 10 and 26 of Isaiah.

210. **Contemporary Nations.** No study of this period would be complete without a knowledge of the other nations that influenced this time. Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Media, Phoenicia, Carthage, Greece and

Rome, all influenced Judah. From the Bible narratives and from secular history the student should become acquainted with the leading events in the history of these nations during this period. This is especially necessary in the matter of such persons as Shishak and Sabaco of Egypt, who had to do with kings Rehoboam and Hoshea; Sennacherib, king of Syria, who harassed King Hezekiah; Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who carried Manasseh into captivity; and Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed Jerusalem.

211. **Principal Events of the Period.** Among the more important events of this period the following should be noticed: (1) The reforms of Hezekiah, who attempted to restore the whole Mosaic order. Inspired by Isaiah he overthrew false worship and showed himself the noblest and purest prince that sat upon the throne since David. He gave Judah a new lease on life. (2) The invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who at first humiliated Hezekiah, but later was destroyed by divine intervention and Jerusalem saved. (3) The wicked reign of Manasseh, who sought to destroy all true worship and established idolatrous worship in its stead. He seems to have adopted all kinds of idolatry; Baal worship, Moloch worship, Chaldean star worship, witchcraft, and engaged in that fierce persecution which filled Jerusalem with blood. (4) His captivity in Babylon and release and attempted reform. (5) The good reign of Josiah, who destroyed the altars of idolatry, repaired the Temple and caused the book of the law to be read—all of which resulted in a very thorough-going revival of true worship. He ranks with Hezekiah as a reformer. Jeremiah was to him, at least in some measure, what Isaiah had been to Hezekiah. Unfortunately he interfered in a war between Egypt and Assyria and lost his life—a fact that greatly grieved Jeremiah, and sounded the death knell to the hopes of Judah. (6) The conflicts with their enemies which finally resulted in the downfall of Jerusalem and the captivity of the people.

212. **Great Religious Declines and Revivals.** The whole history of the kingdom of Judah is marked by religious declines and revivals as follows: (1) A decline under the reign of Rehoboam. Despite the protests of

prophets the worship of Jehovah fell off, heathen altars were erected and gross immoralities spread everywhere. (2) A revival during the reign of Asa and Jehosaphat. Asa reigned forty-one years and Jehosaphat twenty-five. The latter reorganized the worship of Jehovah and provided for religious instruction. (3) A decline began in the reign of Jehoram and continued until the reign of Ahaz where the lowest possible spiritual state was reached. (4) A new revival under Hezekiah, who, led by the prophets, introduced sweeping social and religious changes. (5) A decline under Manasseh who reared images to Baal, defiled the Temple and overthrew the good work of his father, Hezekiah. (6) A revival under Josiah, grandson of Manasseh, whose piety began to manifest itself at the age of sixteen. He began his reforms at the age of twenty, and spent six years in hewing down the altars and images of idolatry. The Temple was repaired, the law found and enjoined upon the people and the Passover celebrated. (7) A final decline that forever destroyed the glory of Judah and led to her captivity in Babylon.

The study of these successive efforts at returning to the true worship of Jehovah and their quick collapse indicates that the kindlings of spiritual life, which they seemed to manifest, were only outward reformations and not real spiritual revivals. Many people did, no doubt, turn in truth to God, but the rapidity with which each effort was followed by a return to deeper depths of immorality, such as those indicated by Amos 5: 16; 7: 17; 8: 6; Is. 1: 23; 10: 1 and Hos. 9: 15, give evidence of the abounding wickedness of the period, and of the superficiality of the revivals.

213. **The Prophets and Their Messages.** Of all Judah's history this is signalized by the greatest prophetic activity. There was constant need, both on the part of the king and on the part of the people, for the warnings and rebuke of the prophets. Six prophets are to be studied here. Some of them delivered part of their prophecy in one period and part in another. No doubt Isaiah and Micah did part of their service during the former period, and Jeremiah performed part of his in the next. But they are all put down here because this

is the time of their greatest activity. The other three prophets are Nahum, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk.

(1) **Isaiah and His Message.** The prophet Isaiah was called to his work the last year of the reign of Uzziah. He lived at Jerusalem during the reign of Uzziah, Ahaz and Hezekiah and most of his life was spent as a sort of court preacher or chaplain to the king. He is the most renowned of all the Old Testament prophets, his visions not being restricted to his own country and times. He spoke for all nations and for all times. "He was a man of powerful intellect, great integrity and remarkable force of character." He deals primarily with the nation and not with the individual. He speaks primarily of the present and not of the future and we must keep these facts in mind if we are to understand him.

In his inaugural vision recorded in the sixth chapter, Isaiah has impressed upon him some truths that shaped his whole career. He saw the holiness and majesty of God; the corruption of those about him; the certainty of awful judgment upon the wicked; the blessing of those whose lives are approved of God; and the salvation of a remnant that was to be the seed of a new Israel. With these truths burning in his soul he pressed the battle of righteousness into every sphere of life. He strove to regenerate the entire national life. He tried to make not only religious worship, but commerce and politics so pure that it could all become a service acceptable to God. He, therefore, became a religious teacher, preacher, social reformer, statesman and seer. He is quoted more in the New Testament than any of the other prophets and, because of the relation of his teaching to New Testament times and teachings, his prophesies have been called the "Bridge between the old and new covenants."

During the time of the beginning of his prophetic activity Israel, or the Northern Kingdom, was outwardly rich and prosperous under the reign of Jeroboam II, but inwardly it was very corrupt. It, therefore, soon went to pieces being conquered into captivity by the Assyrians. In Judah, the Southern Kingdom, things were not going well during this time. While Uzziah, Jotham and Ahaz ruled oppression, wickedness, and idolatry was everywhere. Ahaz made an alliance with Assyria, which

finally brought destruction to Israel, but Hezekiah listened to Isaiah and made reforms, and God destroyed the Assyrian army before Jerusalem was destroyed.

The contents of the book have been said to include (1) warnings and threats against his own people because of their sins. (2) Sketches of the history of his times. (3) Prophesies of the return of Israel from captivity. (4) Prophesies concerning the coming of the Messiah. (5) Predictions of the judgment of God on other nations. (6) Discourses that urge upon Israel moral and religious reformation.. (7) Visions of the future glory and prosperity of the church. (8) Expression of thanksgiving and praise. The outline for study is: (1) Some promises and rebukes, Chs. 1-6. (2) The back of Immanuel, Chs. 7-12. (3) The judgment of the world and the triumph of God's people, Chs. 24-27. (4) Judah's relation to Egypt and Assyria, Chs. 28-32. (5) The great deliverance of Jerusalem, Chs. 33-39. (6) God's preparation for certain deliverance, Chs. 40-48. (7) Jehovah's Servant, the Messiah, will bring deliverance, Chs. 49-57. (8) The restoration of Zion and Messianic Kingdom, with promises and warnings for the future, Chs. 58-66.

(2) **Micah and His Message.** His name means "who is the Lord?" and he was a native of Moresheth, a small town of Gath. He was a younger contemporary of Isaiah and prophesied to both Israel and Judah during the time of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah; and of Pekah and Hoshea, the last two kings of Israel. He sympathized deeply with the common people, being moved by the social wrongs of his time (Chs. 2, 3), and became the people's advocate and defender as well as their accuser. He clearly sets forth the wickedness of Judah and [illegible] eir punishment, their restoration and the c[illegible]ist. As compared with Isaiah, he w[illegible]s a sir[illegible]yman, born of obscure parentage [illegible]cog[illegible]ne of the peasant classes, while [illegible]ophet of high social standing and a [illegible] The Great Truths of the Prophecy [illegible](1) [illegible]uction of Israel (1: 6-7). (2) The [illegible]lem and the temple (3: 12 and 7: 15). (3) [illegible]ng off of the Jews to Babylon (4: 10). (4) [illegible] from captivity with peace and pros-

perity and with spiritual blessing (4: 1-8 and 7: 11-17). (5) The ruler in Zion (Messiah) (4: 8). (6) Where and when he should be born (5: 2). This is his great prophecy and is accepted as final in the announcement to Herod. There are four points: (1) The impending calamity, Ch. 1. (2) The sins that have brought on this calamity, Chs. 2, 3. (3) The promised restoration and glory, Chs. 4, 5. (4) God's controversy with Israel, Chs. 6, 7.

(3) **Jeremiah and His Message.** His name means "exalted of Jehovah," and he is ranked second among the great Old Testament writers. He lived the last of the sixth and the first of the fifth century before Christ. His ministry began in 626 B.C., the thirteenth year of Josiah (1: 2), and lasted about forty years. He probably died in Babylon during the early years of the captivity. He was of a sensitive nature, mild, timid, and inclined to melancholy. He was devoutly religious and naturally shrank from giving pain to others. He was uncommonly bold and courageous in declaring the message of God, although it was unpopular and subjected him to hatred and even to suffering wrong. He was unsparing in the denunciations and rebukes administered to his nation, not even sparing the prince. He is called the weeping prophet. He was distressed both by the disobedience and apostasy of Israel and by the evil which he foresaw. Being very devoutly religious, he was pained by the impiety of his time.

A knowledge of the condition of the nations at this time is important in any study of these prophesies. Israel, the Northern Kingdom, had been carried into captivity and Judah stood alone against her enemies. Judah had fallen into a bad state, but Josiah, who reigned when Jeremiah began his ministry, attempted to bring about reforms and restore the old order. After Josiah's death, however, wickedness grew more and more until, in the latter part of the life of Jeremiah, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and Judah was led away into captivity. The world powers of the time of Jeremiah's birth were Assyria and Egypt. They were contending for supremacy. But Jeremiah lived to see both of them subdued and Babylon mistress of the world. He foresaw also how Babylon would fall

and how a kingdom greater than all would rise wherein there would be righteousness and peace.

The book of Jeremiah is composed principally of biographical sketches, history and prophecy, but the events and chapters are not in chronological order. It closes the period of the monarchy and marks the destruction of the holy city and of the sanctuary and tells of the death agony of the nation of Israel, God's chosen people. But he saw far beyond the judgments of the near future to a brighter day when the eternal purpose of divine grace would be realized. The book, therefore, emphasizes the future glory of the kingdom of God which must endure even though Israel does perish. Jeremiah made two special contributions to the truth as understood by men of his time. (1) The spirituality of religion. He saw the coming overthrow of their national and formal religion and realized that to survive that crisis, religion must not be national but individual and spiritual. (2) Personal responsibility (31: 29, 30). If religion was to be a spiritual condition of the individual, the doctrine of personal responsibility was a logical necessity. These two teachings constitute a great step forward.

The simplest possible outline of the book as a guide for reading is: (1) The prophets call and assurance, Ch. 1. (2) Judah's sins set forth, Chs. 2-6. (3) The call to repentance and appeal to the covenant, Chs. 7-13. (4) Rejection and captivity foretold, Chs. 14-22. (5) The restoration of the remnant, Chs. 23-29. (6) The complete restoration, Chs. 30-33. (7) The doom of Jerusalem due to the wickedness of the people, Chs. 34-36. (8) The history of Jeremiah and his times, Chs. 37-45. (9) Prophesies against foreign nations, Chs. 46-51. (10) Historical appendix, Ch. 52.

(4) **Zephaniah and His Message.** Zephaniah was a son of Cushi, a descendant of Hezekiah, and prophesied about 630 B.C. during the reign of Josiah. His prophesies may have aided in inaugurating and in carrying to success the reforms of Josiah. His name means "Hid of the Lord," and he is supposed to have been a contemporary of Habakkuk. His prophecy seems to be based upon the ravages of the Scythians, whom the nations had come to fear and whom Egypt had bribed, and looks

to the judgment of the Lord which cannot be escaped. Its theme, therefore, is "The great day of the Lord" in which suffering will come upon all nations with which the prophet is familiar, Jerusalem and all Judea included. Converts would be won from all parts of the world and these would worship Jehovah, "every one from his place." He portrays: (1) The coming day of wrath, Ch. 1. (2) The judgment of evil nations, 2: 1—3: 7. (3) The promised blessing for the faithful remnant, 3: 8-20.

(5) **Nahum and His Message.** The name of the prophet means "consolation" which seems to be in complete harmony with his mission. We do not know where he uttered his prophecy, whether in Philistia or at Nineveh. Some think he escaped into Judah when the captivity of the Ten Tribes began and that he was at Jerusalem at the time of the Assyrian invasion. If these conclusions are to be relied on the date of the prophecy would be in the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, between 720 and 698 B.C. Others, however, put it between the destruction of Thebes 664 B.C. and the fall of Nineveh 607 B.C. This is on the basis that it may have been either during the reign of Josiah, 640-625 B.C., or in the reign of Manasseh, 660 B.C.

The theme of the book is the approaching fall of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, which held sway for centuries and has been regarded as the most brutal of the ancient heathen nations. It was intended to comfort his people who had been so long harassed by Assyria, which was soon to fall and trouble them no more. The style is bold, fervid, eloquent, and differs from all the prophetic books we have studied thus far, in that it is silent concerning the sins of Judah. It is a sort of exultation over the distress of a cruel foe—a shout of triumph over the downfall of an enemy that had prevented the exaltation of the people of Judah. He emphasizes vengeance and mercy as the twofold manifestation of divine holiness, one resulting in the destruction of the wicked (1: 2), the other in the salvation of the righteous (1: 15; 2: 2). We are reminded of God's sovereignty over the world and of the absolute necessity of personal and national righteousness. The three chapters made the three divisions of the outline. (1) The doom of Nineveh pro-

nounced, Ch. 1. (2) The siege and fall of Nineveh, Ch. 2. (3) The sins which will cause Nineveh's ruin, Ch. 3.

(6) **Habakkuk and His Message.** His name means "embracing," and he very likely was a contemporary of Jeremiah and prophesied between 608 B.C. and 628 B.C. at a time of political and moral crises. He may have been a Levite connected with the Temple music. As Nahum prophesied the fall of Assyria for its oppression of Israel, Habakkuk tells of God's judgments upon the Chaldeans because of their oppression. The style is poetical and displays a very fine imagery. He does not teach as do the other prophets. He is perplexed about the success of other and wicked nations. The prophecy is, therefore, in the nature of a dialog between the prophet and the Divine Ruler. He addresses God, and questions the justice if not the reality of divine providence. He cannot understand why they are no better off under the rule of Babylonia (Chaldeans) which had overthrown Assyria than they were formerly while Assyria ruled them. He wonders how God could use the wicked Chaldeans (Barbarians) to execute his purposes. He wonders why wickedness seems to triumph while the righteous suffer—the question of Job applied to the nation. The people are questioning the justice of God and he wonders if the righteousness of God can be vindicated before the people so long as the righteous suffer and the wicked triumph. The book has three divisions (1) The problem of apparent triumph of sin, Ch. 1. (2) The impending punishment of the Chaldeans, Ch. 2. (3) An age of confidence in God, Ch. 3.

214. **The Problem of the Prophets.** (1) The anti-prophetic party. During this period there arose a strong anti-prophetic party. Isaiah had prophesied the downfall of Assyria and the establishment of a peaceful reign under a king of the Davidic line. But this ideal Messianic King had not come, Assyria had not been destroyed and the condition of Judah had not been changed. The popular opinion was that the prosperity of Assyria indicated that her gods had won and that it was well for Israel to worship those gods. This anti-prophetic party was headed by the king, and not only set aside the prophetic party, but persecuted it. Jewish tradition

said that Isaiah was martyred during the persecutions of Manasseh. Certainly foreign worship was strongly established. (2) The prophet's objection to idolatry. While the work of Isaiah was thus undone and heathenism entrenched, the prophetic party was ceaselessly engaged in combat against idolatry. They believed that it would ruin the nation. They found three objections to idolatry. (a) A political objection. They were genuine patriots and thought that this worship would make Israel like other nations. They would then lose their distinction, which was based on their world mission, and would become an inferior nation filled with foreign customs. (b) A social and moral ground. They objected to the lustfulness, self-indulgence, immorality and social injustice to which idolatry led. (c) A religious objection. To them idolatry meant, and rightly so, to deny that Jehovah was the only God, and to proclaim that other gods were superior to him, at least in some things. Their fight along these lines brought them sore sufferings, and they, no doubt, did much secret work among the friends of Jehovah worship.

215. **The Teachings of the Prophets.** The sermons of the prophets cover a wide range of subjects: religious, political, commercial, and social, and touch upon matters both national and personal. Besides the objections to idolatry mentioned above and the lessons they imply, the following may be regarded as among their most important teachings. (1) That Jehovah is a moral being—holy, just, wise and good. (2) That Jehovah was the God, not only of Judah and of Israel, but of all nations. (3) That no man, no set of men, and no nation can thwart the plans of God. (4) That God's judgments though sometimes delayed, are certain to overtake the sinful. (5) That religion is not separate from life, but the very central factor of it—that religion and ethics are so blended that "to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humble before his God" is shown to be man's whole duty. (6) That religion is a personal, spiritual relation between God and man. This is especially the contribution of Jeremiah, and lays the foundation for all true faith, and is a basal principle of our Christianity.

216. **False Prophets.** Wherever there are the true there are also the false and the counterfeit. If God will reveal his will to men, Satan will counterfeit it in magic and witchcraft. It is not surprising, therefore, that there should arise false prophets and that they would meet with favor on the part of those who objected to the teachings of the true prophets. It is to be expected that, among a people whose history is primarily religious, false leaders would prove to be a constant source of trouble. Among those who were active in Israel and Judah the following should be noted: (1) an old prophet of Bethel (1 Kings 13: 11), (2) 400 prophets with a lying spirit (1 Kings 22: 6-8, 22, 23), (3) 450 prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18: 19, 22, 40), (4) 400 prophets of Asherah (1 Kings 18: 19.) A study of these will show that some are idolatrous prophets and others perverted worshipers of Jehovah, who did not really prophesy at all. Some were, no doubt, deliberate deceivers of the people, while others were perhaps self-deceived.

During the years immediately preceding the Babylonian captivity, these false prophets exerted a most pernicious influence upon Judah's history. They undermined the influence of the true prophets and lured the people to their ruin. Isaiah talks about the prophet that teaches lies (Is. 9: 15). Jeremiah talks of prophets of lies, who prophesy, not having been sent of Jehovah (Jer. 14: 13-15; 23: 21-22). Micah tells of the prophets who make the people err (Mi. 3: 5). Jeremiah was openly opposed by a false prophet, named Hananiah (Jer. Ch. 28). These prophets destroyed confidence in the messages of the true prophets, and brought about a time when the voice of these messengers of God ceased to be heard in Israel. More than all others, perhaps, they were responsible for the nation's fall, and they teach us the evil of giving religious sanction to a wicked course.

217. **Teachings of the Story.** It is most difficult to put down the permanent lessons or teachings of this period. This is made so because of the proportionately small amount of historical data compared with the relatively large proportion of prophetic discourse. It is

difficult to combine the two without overlapping. To the teachings of the prophets given above the following are well worth preserving as lessons for our day as well as theirs. (1) All reformation must begin at the house of God and in connection with his worship—witness the reform work of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah. It needs the religious sanction. (2) Religion must set the standards for the conduct of national affairs. Here is the responsibility of churches and teachers of religion. (3) Sin blinds men to their best interests, turns them against their best friends, and issues in their ruin. They put Jeremiah in prison. (4) The political sentiment, or the politician, that neglects or attacks God or the national recognition of him is perilous to the nation. (5) The loss of the sense of vision of God leads to "degraded ideals, deadened consciences, and defeated purposes." (6) True love: (a) is not blind to the sins of the one loved; (b) does not try to cover up the faults, but tries to turn one from them; (c) does not desert one when calamity comes because of persistence in sin. See the attitude of Jeremiah to Judah before and after the captivity.

218. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Study each of the teachings of the prophets given above. (a) Try to find Scripture basis for it. (b) Discuss it as a universal principle. (2) Study each of the Scriptures referred to in the discussion above on false prophets. (a) From reference collect other passages on the subject. (b) Make a list of their prophecies and tell how to determine whether a prophet is false. (3) From the Scriptures given above on wealth and luxury and from others to be pointed out: (a) List the evidences of wealth; (b) Compare the conditions then and now. (4) Following the instructions for study in the paragraph above on contemporaneous nations prepare a list of facts concerning each, especially of matters that affected Judah. (5) Name the kings of this period. Tell: (a) How each came into office. (b) How long he reigned. (c) How his career ended. (d) What prophet preached to each and the nature of the prophecy. (6) Hezekiah's sickness (2 Kings 20: 1-11; 2 Chron. 32: 24-26). (7) His song of thanksgiving (Is. 38: 10-20)—carefully

analyze it. (8) Sennacherib's invasion (2 Kings 18: 14-19; end; Is. 14: 24-27; 36: 1—37: 10; 2 Chron. 32: 1-23). (a) The object of the expedition. (b) The conference with Hezekiah and the outcome.

SECTION IV. RELIGION DURING THE PERIOD

219. **Conditions at the Beginning of the Period.** The last period closed with a great complex system of religion. We saw how the people held some ideals that were good, some that were bad and some that were strangely inconsistent. They held many low and imperfect notions about the character, as well as the nature and work of God. Moreover, they had proven that they were unstable in their convictions and, hence often lapsed into idolatry. They were surrounded by people who practised idolatry, and we may expect that there will be other religious failures on their part.

220. **Religion During the Early Monarchy.** While the history does not give a careful description of the religious usages, their worship was certainly of a very simple character, suited to their country, their occupations and their tribal and family life. It was, to a great degree, a formal and ceremonial religion. But in spite of this formalism it was an active moral force in the nation, and the standards of conduct recognized by the Israelites were in many respects higher than prevailed among their neighbors. It is also evident that great religious changes took place during the period. Samuel brought about a great revival of true religion and established schools of the prophets, which seem to have enjoyed the blessings of heaven. In the promotion and advancement of morality the prophets made religion the chief agent. No doubt the leading feature of the religious history of this time was the development of the prophetic spirit. It was unquestionably due to the prophets, in whom religious faith and fervor were combined with intellectural capacity that Israel owed, in the early times, her national well-being, and, in later times, her spiritual pre-eminence amongst mankind.

While the external conditions of Israel were completely changed with the firm establishment of the kingship of David, these religious changes were confirmed. David, by his military success, removed the danger of hostile neighbors to which they had been exposed and, thereby, safeguarded its religion from being violently destroyed by surrounding heathendom. But now the throne, being no longer endangered by foreign enemies, the nation itself became a danger to the life and liberty of the Israelites. Accordingly, the prophets ceased to contend for national rights against foreign aggression, and became the defenders of individual rights against the tyranny of their own king. The prophetic attitude toward David and his reign soon assumed a new and hopeful aspect. His success, compared with the weak and wretched reign of Saul, led them to believe that God purposed for them to work out their destiny under the government of kings like David. Their hopes thus raised found expression in prediction. This prediction took two forms—first of blessings upon the house of David, as such, and second, that the great Deliverer was to be a member of this family. Thus, this early portion of the period gave us a somewhat clearer revelation of the coming Messiah.

221. **Two New and Powerful Religious Factors.** While it is difficult to draw lines of distinction between the periods so that the distinguishing religious characteristics of each will stand forth prominent, the reign of Solomon does mark, with some precision, a new phase in the record of Hebrew religion. Here are found two new factors that profoundly influence the religion of later times. (1) Israel's wider international relations. Thereby came an enlarged knowledge, more complex interests and increasing temptations. In view of the intimate bond between a community and the deity it worshiped, Israel's new political connections would affect her religion. The treaties of friendship contracted with foreign peoples involved a toleration of foreign worship and a willingness to allow its introduction into Israel. The corrupting influence of these religions, brought in from powerful neighbors, whose friendship they had engaged, was far more dangerous than the

evil practises of the conquered tribes of Canaan living among them. The prophets recognized this danger and constantly criticized any policy that would endanger the people's allegiance to God. (2) The erection of the Temple. While there were other local shrines, the Temple was bound, by reason of its position at the capital, and because of the magnificence of its structure, to attract the thoughts and mould the aspirations of religious Israelites. Then, too, they brought up the Ark of the Covenant and placed it in the Temple, and around it as the basis of their hope of mercy they unified the love and service of all the tribes. When, therefore, religious reformations were necessary the Temple at Jerusalem suggested the direction which reforms should take, and, thereby, during the following centuries, shaped or modified the religion of the Jewish people.

222. **Position and Power of the Prophets.** Already much has been said of the work of the prophets, both in connection with the study of those thus far met in the narrative and in this section about religion. Let us now consider the position and power to which they have come in this period. (1) They were the recognized exponents of the divine purposes and will, and oracles were sought from them instead of being obtained by the priestly Ephod and Urim and Thummin. This approach to the divine mind through the human spirit was a notable advance. Progress in the comprehension of the divine nature and insight into God's relation to his people became increasingly possible and easy, because revelation had in the human mind and character a fitting channel of expression. (2) They became asserters of the divine will. During the period of Assyrian ascendancy there was the first development of written prophecy. This made the teachings of the prophets available for study. By this time, and partly because of the written prophecies, the people, except occasionally, ceased to consult the prophets as seers and diviners. Prophets, therefore, became bold preachers and without waiting to be called upon, tried to interpret to the people Jehovah's will and ways and to explain to them his providences, his nature, his attributes and his character. They assigned all happenings to the direct agency of God and saw in the experiences

of their nation and the world the accomplishment of a divine and moral purpose. They denounced the nation's sins and follies as well as social and religious corruption, but always offered forgiveness to the penitent and enforced their lessons by all the devices of oratory. (3) They were divinely endowed. It is impossible to explain the position and power of the prophets on any other basis than that they possessed divine endowment in a pre-eminent and unique degree. The facts that lead to that conclusion are three-fold. (a) The prophets themselves were confident that they were the spokesmen of the Almighty. They regarded themselves as the mouthpieces of God and ascribed their utterances to him. They were sure they had his spirit and appear to have been compelled to speak by virtue of an inward power that burned as fire in their bones. This led them into many places of danger from which they would otherwise have shrunk. (b) The pure and noble character of their teachings. Their conceptions of the spirituality of deity and of the ethical nature of his service were so far above those of the times and so contrary to the popular notions that they can only be explained on divine grounds. (c) The fact that they uttered predictions of the future that were wonderfully fulfilled. These predictions had to do with nearby as well as remote future events. Their prediction of the nearer events bore evidence of their own confidence in their ability to predict. Such predictions would during their own day prove them false prophets, if they should fail. Many such predictions were made contrary to, and, in defiance of, all the human probabilities of the case and in that again showed their impossibility as a mere human intuition. Among the far-off events those towering above all others were concerning the Messiah. Seven hundred years after the earliest prophecies of an explicitly Messianic nature had been delivered, Jesus was born and not only fulfilled all those predictions as we understand them, but himself claimed to fulfill in himself all the predictions which these and others contained.

223. **Two Lines of Advance.** Any serious study of the prophetic writings of this period will reveal the

fact that considerable development was made in the Hebrew thought, and that this advancement was in the direction both of fulness and precision. In this progress, as in all other advancement of the period, the prophets were the leaders. While there is an appreciable advance by the prophets of the Babylonian ascendancy over those of the Assyrian period, the whole advance is here put together and considered under two heads.

(1) **As to Jehovah.** Their teachings upon this matter had to do with three subjects: (a) The nature or character of Jehovah. Israel had always believed that Jehovah was the author of moral laws demanding uprightness and humanity, and that he was upright. But here they come to regard him, not only as a God of righteousness, but of love. He is represented as inviting them to return to him and as waiting to show mercy and forgiveness. (Isa. 1: 18; Hos. 2: 14ff; 11: 1, 8, 9; 14: 4). Along with this enlarged view of the moral side of the Divine Being is found an increasing sense of his spirituality. He was considered unlike man and a spirit (Hos. 11: 9; Isa. 31: 3). To this view of the prophets of the Assyrian period, those of the Babylonian period added the claim that Jehovah alone was Deity and that the other gods whose worship they were rebuking were not gods at all and could not profit nor deliver them in times of trouble (Jer. 2: 11; 16: 20; Hos. 2: 18). Ezekiel went a step further and put such majesty and holiness upon Jehovah that he regarded his blessing to the chosen nation, not wholly from a motive of loving-kindness, but to promote the divine glory. His mercies and deliverances had been, and would be divine, lest his name be profaned among the nations, who would attribute his failure to bless and protect them to his lack of power (Ezek. 20: 9, 14, 22; 36: 22ff). He makes Jehovah's character so transcendent that his actions can only be accounted for by motives within himself and relating to himself. (b) His relation to the world. Up to this time the nation had not thought of Jehovah as concerning himself with the moral offenses of others than Israel, except in so far as Israel fell a victim to these offenses, or when he was to be an avenger of them. But now they extend his dominion to all nations and

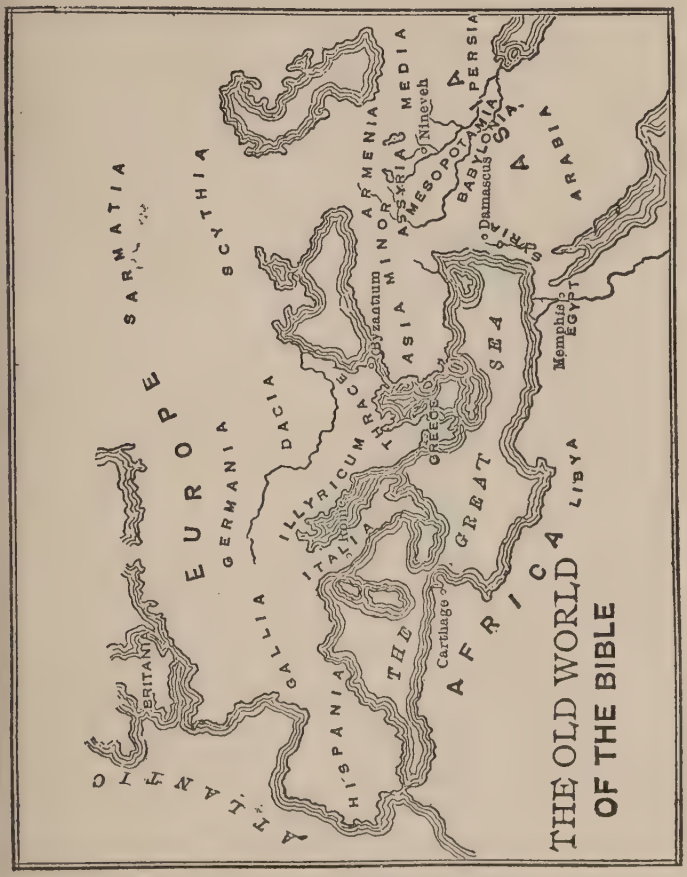
even over universal nature. He ruled in physical nature (Amos 4: 13; 5: 8-9; 9: 6) and knew the secret thoughts of men (Amos 4: 13). He directed the movements of other nations, even the most wicked becoming instruments in his hands (Amos 9: 7; Isa. 9: 5-15; 37: 26-69). The prophets of the Babylonian ascendancy did not stop with this idea that Jehovah judges the nations as such, but asserted that he was also the judge of individual men. Since in the punishment of a nation certain religious persons suffered along with the wicked, and in blessing the nation the wicked shared in the blessing of the righteous, there gradually grew up a sense of the rights of every individual to be accountable for no more and no less than his own sins. They, therefore, ceased to put to death children for the offense of their father (2 Kings 14: 6) and Jeremiah and Ezekiel declared that there would be no more occasion for the old proverb "the fathers had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge," but that, henceforth, everyone should die for his own iniquity (Jer. 31: 29, 30; Ezek. 18: 2-4). Here we advance to the truth that God's attitude toward a man is not determined by the family or society of which he is a member, but that he stands in a personal and individual relation to him. (c) His requirements of service. In this period the prophets distinguished between the moral and ceremonial requirements of the law. They severely denounced the performance of the ritual when it was not accompanied with moral service in the sight of God. No sacrifices could take the place of the ethical holiness which Jehovah demanded from his people (Amos. 4: 4-5; 5: 21-24; Hos. 6: 6; 8: 13; Isa. 1: 11-14; Mic. 6: 6-8). They constantly sought to reform the people along this line. So far, however, they thought man had resident in himself the power of self-determination and on that basis was appealed to to turn from evil to righteousness (Hos. 12: 6; 14: 1). But in the seventh century during the Babylonian period the prophets recognized the need of divine grace in their hearts to help them in this change. Jeremiah represents the nation as crying to Jehovah "turn thou me and I shall be turned" (Jer. 31: 18; Lam. 5: 21). Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel declared

that God would give the people a new heart (Jer. 24: 7; 31: 33, 34; Ezek. 36: 26, 27). This was a distinct advance over past teaching and represented Jehovah as so changing the hearts of the people as to dispose them to respond to his commands and to obey his precepts. It was the expression of a belief in an eternal change in men's hearts produced by the immediate influence of the divine Spirit. Here was a doctrine of sovereign grace alongside that of human responsibility.

(2) **As to the Bond Between Jehovah and Israel.** Here again there are three points of interest. (a) The captivity. Heretofore, they counted Jehovah as always on the side of Israel. They might, because of sin, suffer temporary defeat, but in any great conflict the popular belief was that Jehovah would intervene to deliver them and overthrow their enemies. But now the prophets saw a sad overthrow in which Israel would suffer captivity (Am. 5: 18-20, 27; 7: 17). They even saw the agent of this judgment. (Am. 9: 3, 6; 5: 27. Isa. 37: 22, 23). They also understood that some would be saved and that some who went into captivity would be restored (Isa. 6: 13; 10: 20-22; Am. 9: 8; Hos. 11: 10-11). (b) The restoration relations and glory. The future was not to be as the past. Israel would not be aloof from, and hostile to other nations. In that age there will be a spirit of generosity toward other nations. Their rule will be to convert and not to exterminate peoples. Their deliverance will so impress the nations that they will fear Jehovah and his people (Micah 7: 16, 17) and the world will be converted to Jehovah. All nations will flow into Mount Zion and seek the way of Jehovah and walk in his paths. The whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 2: 2-4; Micah 4: 1-3; Isa. 11: 9). To be sure, the thoughts of the prophets were turned directly toward the destiny of their own people, but they included within the range of the future the whole world, and admitted Gentiles to the knowledge and favor of Jehovah. While delivering separate oracles of woe against Egypt, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar and Elam (Chs. 46-49) Jeremiah declared that all nations should be gathered

unto Jerusalem in the name of Jehovah (3: 17) and that they should be blessed and should glory in him (4: 2). (c) The Messianic King and Kingdom. David had in the main, secured for Israel her place among the nations, and it was through his line that they could hope to secure the gracious purposes of Jehovah toward Israel. This belief, connected with the expectation of the captivity and restored glory, led naturally to the hope for the advent of an illustrious prince of David's house. This led them to believe that the restoration and glorification of Israel would come through a personal Saviour, who, like David, should be Jehovah's Messiah or anointed one. And so long as the kingdom lasted the figure of the Messianic King was prominent in the utterances of the prophets, and also in the expression of the Psalms.

MAP OF THE WORLD DURING THE MEDO-PERSIAN, GRECIAN AND ROMAN SUPREMACY.



CHAPTER V

THE HEBREW PROVINCE

(Ezekiel, Daniel, Lamentations, Obadiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.)

From the Captivity in Babylon to the Birth of Christ

SECTION I. THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH

224. **General Situation.** We have traced the fortunes of the chosen people through their bondage, wilderness wanderings, conquest of Canaan, reign of Judges, united and divided kingdoms and Judah alone—a period of fifteen hundred years from Abraham. We saw their glorious outburst of national life, their division, and the ten tribes of the North go down into political and spiritual night. We are now to see Judah broken up, Jerusalem in ruins, her king and leaders in captivity and the end of the glory of national independence. Henceforth, except for a brief time, Judah is to be ruled by a foreign power, and superstition, ignorance, idolatry and gross immorality are everywhere, but the experiment of human redemption had not failed, nor had the knowledge of God perished from the earth. The prophets saw a new vision of the coming of Christ, and spoke of the world-wide spiritual reign which he would set up. It began to appear that the old Jewish Theocracy was temporary and external and preparatory to the spiritual work of the future.

225. **The Ten Tribes Lost.** After the fall of Samaria we hear but little of the ten tribes. They were carried into the regions of Nineveh by the Assyrians, and all effort to locate them has failed and, no doubt, will fail.

Sargon, in an inscription found at Nineveh, says that he carried away into captivity 27,290. These were perhaps leaders of Israel that he thought might lead a revolt. He sent others to Palestine to take their places, and the Israelites seemed to have mingled with the races about them and to have lost their identity. No doubt, some of them as individuals were faithful to the worship of Jehovah, and may have found their way back to Palestine under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. It was different with Judah who, all the time, kept true to her ideals, and looked for the return that had been prophesied. This hope was realized through the work of Ezra and Nehemiah, following the decree of Cyrus.

226. **Babylonian Empire.** (1) Her condition. We are now within the fourth period of Babylonian history. It is during the successful reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned more than forty years, and was one of the greatest monarchs of ancient times. He made war upon the Phoenicians, Egyptians and Jews, and extended his kingdom westward to the Mediterranean Sea. It was a country of splendid culture and was noted for its astronomers, architects and great merchants. Astrology was a part of their religion and when Alexander conquered Babylon in 331 B.C. he found an unbroken series of astronomical calculations covering 1903 years. They built great structures, worked in metals, cut gems, carried on great commerce and made delicate fabrics upon the looms. Nebuchadnezzar built magnificent temples and palaces and wonderful hanging gardens. Such was the culture and learning of the people to whom Judah now became subject. (2) Her fall. As the prophets watched the changing fortunes of the nations they saw the coming doom of their oppressors and, with this historical background, predicted the fall of Babylon. One of them predicted that Elam and Media would come down upon Babylonia and, as a result the watchman cried, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon." They also mention the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes. They describe the wars but count the fall of the country as the punishment of God for their rule of tyranny. They dwell upon the greatness of the calamity and manifest a

spirit of bitterness and revenge. These prophecies are found in most impressive form in Isaiah Chs. 13, 14, 21 and Jeremiah Chs. 50-51. In B.C. 539 Cyrus advanced upon Babylon, whereupon the king of Babylon (Nabuna'id) brought up all the important deities of his provinces that he might have ample protection. This offended the cities from which they were taken and stirred Isaiah to an expression of bitter sarcasm (Isa. 46: 1-11). The triumph of Cyrus was easy, Babylon probably having surrendered through treachery. This ended the Semitic rule which controlled the Western Asiatic world for nearly two thousand years. For the next thousand years Palestine and Syria were ruled by the Aryan races.

227. **Judah Led Captive.** (1) The cause. As has already been seen, the sin and degradation of the people was the primary cause of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. They rejected God, set up institutions of false worship, and indulged in the basest of practices. God became offended and ceased to interfere in their behalf when they were in an hour of crisis. Then, too, they engaged in certain rebellions against the kings of Assyria and Babylon—against Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar. All these conditions led to the national overthrow. (2) The captivity. The captivity was completely accomplished through three successive invasions of the hosts of Nebuchadnezzar. (a) During the reign of Jehoiakim, 607 B.C., at which time Daniel and his friends along with others, were carried into captivity (2 Kings 24: 1; Jer. 25: 1; Dan. 1: 1-7). (b) During the reign of Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah, 597 B.C. When the skilled workmen of Jerusalem, ten thousand of the people and King Jehoiachin, who was held captive thirty-five years, were carried into Babylon. Among these were Ezekiel and one of the ancestors of Mordecai, the cousin of Esther (2 Kings 24: 10-16; Ez. 1: 1, 2; Est. 2: 5, 6.) (c) During the reign of Zedekiah 587 B.C., at which time Jerusalem was conquered, its walls and palaces and the Temple were destroyed, and large numbers of the inhabitants were carried into exile (2 Kings 24: 18; 2 Chron. 36: 11-21; Jer. 52: 1-11). This marks the end of the Southern Kingdom and the be-

ginning of a time of repentance and longing for the prophet's promise of the return to the Holy City.

228. **Length of the Captivity.** Jeremiah predicts that the captivity will last seventy years (Jer. 25: 11-22; 29: 10 see 2 Chron. 36: 21; Dan 9: 2; Zech. 7: 5). There are two ways of adjusting the dates to fulfill this prediction. (1) From the first invasion and the carrying into captivity of Daniel and others, 607 B.C. to 537 B.C. when the first company returned under Zerubbabel. (2) From the final fall of Jerusalem, 587 B.C., to the completion of the renewed Temple and the dedication in 517 B.C. Either satisfies the Scriptures. In history it is customary to speak of this exile as covering only the fifty years from 587 B.C. when Jerusalem was destroyed and the last company carried away to 537 B.C. when the first company returned under Zerubbabel.

229. **The Fugitives in Egypt.** When Jerusalem fell the king of Babylon allowed many of the poorer people to remain in Palestine, and Jedediah, a grandson of Josiah, was appointed to rule over them (2 Kings 25: 22). His career was a very useful one, but through jealousy he was soon murdered (2 Kings 25: 25). Wherefore, many people, fearing lest Nebuchadnezzar would avenge his death, fled into Egypt (2 Kings 25: 26). Jeremiah, at the fall of Jerusalem, declined a safe conduct to Babylon, preferring to remain among the ruins of the land he loved. He attempted to keep his people from going into Egypt (Jer. 42: 9-22), but, when he failed, went along with them and shared their destiny (Jer. 43: 6, 7). They settled at Tahpanhes (Jer. 44: 1), a frontier town, where many foreigners lived under the protection of Egypt. They seem to have built a temple there and to have tried to retain their racial ideals. Jeremiah continued his faithful prophecies and the people continued as faithfully to reject his counsel. We do not know how he ended his career. An earthly Christian tradition says he was put to death by his own people, but Jewish tradition says he escaped from Egypt and made his way to Babylon.

230. **Exiles in Babylon.** The state of the exiles in Babylon may not be fully known, but from the con-

temporary writers very much may be known. (1) Their home. They were settled in a rich, fertile plain, intersected by many canals. It was on the river, or canal, Chebar (Ez. 1: 1, 3; 3: 15, etc.) which ran southeast from Babylon to Nippur. It was a land of traffic and merchants and fruitful fields (Ez. 17: 4-5). They were colonists rather than slaves and enjoyed great freedom and prosperity. (2) Their occupation. By reason of their intellectual and moral superiority the Jews, as they are called from this time forward, would secure rapid advancement. Some of them, such as Daniel, obtained high position. Others became skilled workmen. Following the advice of Jeremiah (Jer. 29: 5), many of them no doubt gave themselves to agriculture and gardening. Probably most of them yielded to the opportunities of the "land traffic and merchants," and engaged in commercial, instead of agricultural, pursuits and accumulated great wealth. (3) Their government. For a long time they were allowed to control their own affairs as their own laws provided. The elders of the families acted as judges and directed affairs in general. For a while they probably held the power of life and death over their own people, but the capital cases were later punished by authority of Babylon (Jer. 29: 22). (4) Their religion. Here also the information is meagre and must be gathered from statements and inferences found in several books. It is certain that they preserved their genealogies, gave up idolatry, abandoned their elaborate ceremonies and public and private sacrifices, conducted private devotion, assembled for prayer and Scripture reading, and greatly enlarged the Canon of the Scriptures.

231. **Benefits of the Captivity.** The destruction of the Jewish State not only changed the life and thought of Israel, but influenced the religious thought of the whole world. At first they were shocked, their hopes seemed shattered, and they lived in the memories of the past in the hopes of the future. But they soon adapted themselves to the new conditions and changed their ideals and beliefs accordingly. The following changes in their attitudes, or in their methods and beliefs, were beneficial. (1) Their union was fully established. Their

sufferings and the danger of being wholly absorbed or destroyed bound them together in such an indissoluble bond that to this day they are a separate people who have resisted all disintegrating influences. (2) Idolatry was completely destroyed. This had been their besetting sin, but their punishment was so severe, their repentance so deep and lasting, that never again, even to our day, have Jews worshiped idols. This lesson was of great value, not only to them, but to all the world as well. (3) A vital sense of repentance was created. They had all the time felt that somehow Jehovah would in a real crisis come to their relief. They had believed that Jerusalem was inviolable, but now it was laid waste, and the temple ravaged, and they were in a strange land. There was time for reflection and they saw the folly of their own course, and learned that repentance for their sins was the only hope of safety and deliverance. (4) A new appreciation and deepened respect for the law of Moses was created. The very first and most important tenets of that law had to do with the sin of worshiping any other than Jehovah, and of making images. Now they saw the importance of that law and ceased to be idolaters, thereby showing a new respect for it. Here also arose that new and important influence in human history known as Judaism. (5) The synagogue was born. They were bereft of their home land and rulers and of the Temple, and it became needful that in some new way they should express their religious and democratic spirit. It became necessary, also, because of their situation, that each community should care for its own spiritual needs. To do this they met on the Sabbath and read the law, sang hymns, offered prayers and delivered exhortations. These services were very similar to the worship of evangelical churches to-day. The building, as well as the assembly which met in it, was called a synagogue. Here they also received and distributed alms and instructed their children. When they returned to Palestine they took the synagogue with them and maintained one in every village. There were said to have been fifteen hundred in Palestine and four hundred and fifty in Jerusalem at the time of the coming of Christ. They

were of great advantage to Paul and other missionaries of the apostolic age in getting a hearing for their message. (6) A new sense of spiritual and personal religion. As the national, festal, and ceremonial worship of the temple was destroyed and the simple worship of the synagogue arose it was easy for them to discover the more personal and more spiritual import of the worship of Jehovah. (7) There arose a belief that Israel had been chosen and trained to bless the world. Hitherto they had believed that God cared for none but Israel. Now they began to see that they were to be an instrument of blessing to others and that they were only safe when living justly and in obedience to Jehovah who cares for all. (8) A new longing for the Messiah arose. If they were to bless others a great king must come and the golden age of the Jehovah-worship and blessings must come. This hope was given strength by all of the preaching of the prophets. (9) The collection of their literature. During the captivity much of the Hebrew literature, especially the sermons of the prophets, were written in permanent form. The prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel and many Psalms were added. The book of Lamentations and chapters 40-44 of Jeremiah were produced here, but refer especially to the condition of those in Egypt.

232. **Importance and Optimism of the Prophetic Messages.** The disappointments endured by the Jews are calculated to bring great discouragement to them. They are in danger of attributing their failure to Jehovah, and, thereby, may lose proper regard for him. They need someone to teach them the significance of their suffering and to bring them some word of hope for the future. This service was rendered by the prophets. As at other times, there was great activity on the part of false prophets (Jer. 29: 4-8, 21-23; Ez. 13: 1-7), but, besides portions of the book of Jeremiah and probably of Isaiah, there are four books of true prophecy, Obadiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Lamentations. These prophecies were designed to comfort the exiled people, and showed an optimism that is very remarkable. They saw the coming doom of their oppressors and were filled with an optimistic spirit of hope. Almost in the same breath

they would predict the ruin of their nation and its restoration glory. When Nebuchadnezzar overthrew the nation and everything indicated the absolute loss of every land value, Jeremiah bought a piece of land. He looked beyond the dark outlook and, by faith, saw a time when "Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land" (Jer. 32: 6-15). There were also frequent prophecies of the salvation of a remnant and glorious Messianic prophecies, all of which were filled with the spirit of optimism. Through this spirit they saw that the golden age of the nation was in the future and not in the past, and were enabled to give the highest possible encouragement to Israel in this, her time of distress. Their spirit has never ceased to be a powerful incentive and a ground of assurance to all who promote moral and religious enterprises.

(1) **Obadiah and His Message.** We know nothing of this prophet except what is found in his prophecy. His name means "servant of the Lord" and his book was doubtless written after the fall of Jerusalem, 587 B.C., and before the destruction of Edom five years later. This indicates a date of about 585 B.C. and would make him contemporary with Jeremiah during part of his ministry. The prophecy was occasioned by the rejoicing of the Edomites over the fall of Jerusalem and Judah. It teaches that God's displeasure and judgment rest upon those who rejoice in the calamity of others and especially upon those who rejoice or glory in the misfortunes of God's people. It was a favorite prophecy with the Jews because it pronounces divine wrath and doom upon Edom, the descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob, who from the beginning had been hostile to Israel. There are two outstanding teachings in the book: (1) That Jehovah is especially interested in his chosen people. (2) That he will establish a new kingdom with Judea and Jerusalem as the center and with holiness, and justice as chief characteristics. The chapter contents fall into four divisions. (1) Edom's punishment, vs. 1-9. (2) Edom's sin, vs. 10-14. (3) Guilt of the nations, vs. 15, 16. (4) Judah shall be restored, vs. 17-21.

(2) **The Book of Lamentations.** The name means elegies or mournful or plaintive poems. It was formerly

a part of Jeremiah and represents the sorrows of Jeremiah when the calamities which he had predicted befell his people, who had often despised and rejected him for his messages. He chose to live with them in their suffering and out of his weeping pointed them to a star of hope. There are five independent poems in as many chapters which are so well planned and wrought out that it could not have resulted from some sudden sentimental outburst. Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 5 have each 22 verses or just the number of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapter 3 has 66 verses or just three times the number of the alphabet. The first four chapters are acrostic, that is each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, beginning at the first and continuing in order to the last. In Ch. 3, each letter is used in order and is three times repeated as the initial letter of three successive lines. Each chapter hears its own message. (1) The misery of Jerusalem, Ch. 1. (2) The cause of the peoples' suffering, Ch. 2. (3) The basis of hope, Ch. 3. (4) The past and present of Israel, Ch. 4. (5) The final appeal for restoration, Ch. 5.

(3) **Ezekiel and His Message.** When Ezekiel wrote the Jews were captives in Babylon, but were treated as colonists and not as slaves. They increased in numbers and accumulated great wealth and some of them rose to the highest offices. They had religious freedom and in this period forever gave up their idolatry. They sought out the books of the law, revised the Canon, wrote some new books and perhaps inaugurated the synagogue worship which became so powerful afterward.

The name of the prophet means "God will strengthen." He was a priest and was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C., 597. He had a home on the river Chebar where the elders of Judah were accustomed to meet. His wife died in the ninth year of his captivity. He was a man of very powerful intellect and apparently from the better classes of those carried into captivity. He is less attractive than Isaiah and less constant in the flow of his thought than Jeremiah. He is not so timid or sensitive as Jeremiah, but has all his horror for sin and all of his grief, occasioned by the wickedness of his people and the suffering which they endured. In his

boldness of utterance he was not surpassed by his predecessors. The nature of his prophecy, or the methods by which he exercised or manifests his prophetic gift differs from that of the other prophets. He does not so much predict events as see visions of them. Allegories, parables, similitudes and visions abound, some of them symbolic of the future and others of existing facts and conditions. The prophet remains on the banks of Chebar and in spirit is transported to Jerusalem and the temple. Much of the book is in character similar to Revelation and while the general subjects are very plain, much of the meaning of the symbols is obscure. There are, however, powerful addresses and eloquent predictions of Divine judgments on the nations. He has been called the father of Judaism and it was probably due to the services of Ezekiel that Israel's religion was preserved during the exile. He repeats all the great teachings of those who preceded him, teachings concerning such matters as justice, morality and spiritual religion, but manifested less interest in ceremonialism (Chs. 6-12; 7: 22; 33: 25). He joins Jeremiah in declaring the moral responsibility of the individual and formulates in considerable detail the doctrines of repentance and forgiveness, particularly showing that repentance is necessary to salvation (Chs. 14, 18 and 33, especially 14: 1-20; 18: 20-32). He proclaims the necessity of a new heart and a new spirit (11: 19; 18: 31; 36: 21). As a Messianic Prophet he looked for the full and glorious restoration of the Jews under a theocracy with a complete national system centered in the temple which has the services of both priests and Levites. Both as priest and as prophet he desired to promote popular holiness and to correct some of the abuses that had endangered the nation. It should be read with the following outline as guide. (1) Ezekiel's call, Chs. 1-3. (2) The siege and certain judgment of the city, Chs. 4-7. (3) The condition of the city and the sins of the people, Chs. 8-19. (4) Renewed proofs and predictions of the doom of Jerusalem and of Judah, Chs. 20-24. (5) Predictions against foreign nations and cities, Chs. 25-32. (6) The restoration of Judah to the promised land, Chs. 33-39. (7) The Messianic times, Chs. 40-48.

(4) **Daniel and His Message.** The very name Daniel which means "God is my Judge" is suggestive. He probably was born in Jerusalem and was one of the noble young carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, 605 B.C. He was educated by order of the king and early distinguished himself by his stand against the luxury and idolatry of Babylon. He rose to great favor and was chosen to stand before the king in one of the highest government positions under the Chaldean, Median and Persian dynasties. He lived through the whole period of the captivity and probably died in Babylon. It is said that not one imperfection of his life is recorded. The angel repeatedly calls him "greatly beloved." Four things of a miraculous nature are very important: (1) The interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream which first brought him into prominence; (2) overcoming the power of fire and escaping unhurt when cast into the fiery furnace; (3) his visions of Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome, and of the eternal Kingdom which God would set up; (4) his escaping alive when cast into the lion's den.

The purpose of the book seems to be: (1) To magnify Jehovah, who delivers his servants, who is God of all nations, and who will punish idolatry, who is pure, righteous, and so forth. (2) To encourage his countrymen to resist the forces that threaten the foundation of their faith. This was done by the example of Daniel and his companions whom Jehovah saved. (3) To give a prophecy or vision of all times from the day of Daniel to the Messianic period. (4) To outline the religious philosophy of history which would issue in a great world state, which the Messianic king would rule by principles of justice and right, and which would subdue all kingdoms and have everlasting dominion. The main idea is the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. As compared with former prophetic books, there are two new teachings. (1) Concerning angels. (2) Concerning a resurrection from the dead.

The outline is simple. Each chapter tells its own story except that the last three are taken up in one vision. (1) Daniel's youth and education, Ch. 1. (2) Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's image dream, Ch. 2. (3) In the fiery furnace, Ch. 3. (4) Interpretation of

Nebuchadnezzar's true dream, Ch. 4. (5) Interpretation of the hand-writing on the wall, Ch. 5. (6) In the lion's den, Ch. 6. (7) Vision of the four beasts, Ch. 7. (8) Vision of the ram and he-goat, Ch. 8. (9) The seventy weeks, Ch. 9. (10) The final vision, Chs. 10-12.

233. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) That sin will tear down both men and nations. This is proven by the overthrow of Israel. (2) Men are responsible and suffer for their own sins, but not for the sins of others (Ez. 18: 2, 3; 33: 10, 11). (3) God controls all circumstances toward the ultimate accomplishment of his purpose. The very defeat of the nation put them in a position which required them to interpret anew their beliefs, and they came nearer to the spiritual ideals of God. So it is always. (4) He makes free use of all "world rulers as his tools to execute his will." He used Babylonia and Persia and their kings to execute his purposes. (5) God sets up and destroys nations. (6) God cares for his people and overrules all for their good—see Daniel, etc. (7) One can live rightly in spite of one's surroundings (see Daniel), and such living will lead men to know God. (8) Evil grows more and more determined while good grows more and more distinct and, hence, the question, "Is the world growing better?" (9) God rejoices in the opportunity to forgive his erring people and in restoring them again into his partnership.

234. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) When, to whom, and by whom the exile was predicted: (a) 2 Kings 20: 17, 18; (b) 2 Kings 21: 10-16. (c) 2 Kings 22: 16, 17; Deut. 28: 25, 52-68. (d) Jer. 25: 9-11. (e) Jer. 34: 2, 3. (f) Mic. 3: 12. (g) Zeph. 1: 2-6. (2) The different classes of exiles: (a) Those in favor with the Court (Dan. 1: 19-21; 2: 45-49. (b) Common laborers—lower classes (Jer. Ch. 29; Ez. Ch. 13. (c) Pretentious prophets (Ez. Ch. 13; Jer. Ch. 29. (3) The social condition of the exiles (2 Kings 25: 27; Dan. 1: 19-21; Jer. 29: 4-7; Esther and passages in Ezekiel). (4) Detail of each of three invasions and the captivity as outlined above—see Scriptures. (5) The exiles in Egypt: (a) Who they were. (b) How they fared. (6) The activity and influence of the false prophets of this age. (7) The story of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams and their

interpretation: (a) the image dream, (b) the tree dream. (8) The stories of: (a) the fiery furnace, (b) of the lions' den. (9) The feast of Belshazzar. (10) The vision of Daniel (7: 1-14; 8: 1-12; 10: 4-6). (11) The four beasts of Daniel and their significance. (12) The benefits mentioned above. (13) The lessons mentioned above—find Scripture basis for them.

SECTION II. THE RESTORATION OF JUDAH

235. **Scripture outline of the Events.** The books of Ezra and Nehemiah furnish the outline of the period and its achievements. The two books were formerly counted one book and appear to be the work of an author living in the fourth century B.C. Together they present a picture of the outstanding experiences and struggles of the post-exilic community, and the following continuous outline of the two is best suited to the proper emphasis of the various events recorded. (1) The rebuilding of the Temple, Ezra Chs. 1-6. (2) The reforms of Ezra, Ezra 7-10. (3) The rebuilding of the walls, Neh. 1-7. (4) The covenant to keep the law, Neh. 8-10. (5) The inhabitants of Jerusalem, Neh. 11: 1—12: 26. (6) The dedication of the wall and the reform of Nehemiah, Neh. 12: 27—13: end.

236. **Predictions of the Return.** The return from captivity had been prophesied long before the fall of Jerusalem. Several prophets had foretold the captivity and in connection with it had told of the destruction of Babylon and Judah's restoration, even the length of their exile being announced. While they were in exile they were constantly encouraged by the promised return foretold to them by Ezekiel, Jeremiah and others. It was not only predicted that they would return, but that the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt. (1) Restoration at the end of seventy years is predicted, Jer. 25: 12; 29: 10; Dan. 9: 2. (2) Other Scriptures for both may be found in Isa. Ch. 13; 14: 21; 44—47; Jer. 28: 4, 11; Chs. 50-52; Ezek. 27, etc.

Isaiah in his prophecies (Isa. Chs. 44-48) not only foretells the return, but gives the following reasons for his

convictions that they would be restored: (1) The incomparable superiority of Jehovah. He is ruler over all physical forces, is superior to the nations that have crushed Israel, and to the heathen gods whom they worship; is able to give strength as well as wisdom to all those who trust him. (2) His past relation to Israel. In former days he led them and gave them victory over very powerful enemies. He has so dealt with them as to prove that he is able to guide their national life and to deliver them. (3) His unique purpose in Israel. He has chosen and trained her for a great world service. His gracious love for them and their partnership with him in this divine program insure their forgiveness and final deliverance. (4) The purpose of their suffering. They were to go forth on a mission of helpfulness to liberate the captives, to open the eyes of the blind and to teach and inspire all mankind. Their own suffering would give them an understanding of the needs of men and an ability to properly sympathize with them.

237. **Rise of the Persian Power and Decree of Cyrus.** This was a time of world change. Great empires in rapid succession fell under the power of new and rising kingdoms. The Assyrian Empire, which superseded the Chaldean Empire about 1500 B.C., and now loomed so large in the eyes of the world, fell before the combined forces of the Medes and Babylonians, B.C. 607. The Babylonian Empire rose to supremacy and was the dominating power when Judah went into captivity. She was the most splendid kingdom the world had ever seen. But now the Persian power conquered Media and the greater part of Assyria, and the Medo-Persian Empire under Cyrus conquered Babylon and held almost universal sway at the time of the restoration. About 150 years after Isaiah had called Cyrus by name and predicted that he would restore God's captive people to their own land, God stirred up his spirit and he issued a proclamation for the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of the Temple. He gave orders that his people should give the Jews silver, gold and beasts. He restored to them the vessels of the Lord and instructed the governors along the way to assist Ezra (Ezra 1: 1-4). This fulfilment of the prophecies gave confidence and hope

to them, and should give to us a deeper appreciation of the divine over-ruling in all these affairs.

238. **Three Expeditions to Jerusalem.** The return from Babylon consisted of three separate detachments under as many different leaders. The first colony to return was led by Zerubbabel, B.C. 536, and consisted of about fifty thousand (Ezra Chs. 1-6). Here we are told of the activities of this colony for a period of about twenty-one years, during which time the Temple was rebuilt and dedicated. On account of strong opposition the work of rebuilding was stopped, but the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, together with the influence of Zerubbabel and Jeshua, the priest, stimulated the people to renew their building operations and complete the Temple (B.C. 515). The books of Haggai and Zechariah come in between the fourth and fifth chapters of Ezra. The second colony returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Ezra (Ezra 7-10), and consisted of about 1800 males with their families. There is here a lapse of about fifty-seven years from the completion and dedication of the Temple to the time of Ezra's going to Jerusalem—the last thirty years of the reign of Darius, the twenty years of the reign of Xerxes and seven years of the reign of Artaxerxes. Ezra obtained permission from Artaxerxes to return, and also letters of instruction to the rulers to give him assistance. He was a scribe of the law of Moses and his mission was primarily a religious one. He was a descendant from the house of Aaron and as such he assumed the office of priest when he reached Jerusalem. Upon his arrival he found that the first colony had fallen into gross immoralities and into unsound religious practices. He rebuked all these sins and brought about a great reform. It is not certain that he remained in Jerusalem. His leave from the king may have been only temporary and he may have gone back to Babylon and returned again to Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah. The third colony was led to Jerusalem by Nehemiah (the book of Nehemiah) who became one of the world's greatest reformers. The number returning is not given. He was cup-bearer to the Persian king, and, upon hearing of the distress of his people, secured permission of him to go to Jerusalem

as the governor. In spite of very determined opposition, he was able to repair the wall of the city and to dedicate it with great ceremony (Neh. Chs. 6, 12). He corrected many abuses, such as those of usury, and restored the national life of the Jews and based it upon the written law. Together with Ezra, he restored the priests to their positions and renewed the temple worship. He went back to the Persian court where he remained several years and then returned to Jerusalem and continued his reforms. This ends the Old Testament history.

239. **Rebuilding of the Temple and Wall.** (1) The rebuilding of the Temple. When Zerubbabel and his company reached the land of their fathers, they scattered and lived in their own cities. But in the seventh month they assembled at Jerusalem and, although the Temple was destroyed, renewed on its old site the altar of burnt-offerings, and offered thereon the regular morning and evening oblations. They also observed the Feast of the Passover, and other feasts, and re-established the regular system of worship. They next secured the assistance of skilled workmen and, in the second month of the second year, laid the foundation of the Temple. This was an occasion for rejoicing for the young and of tears for the old, who had seen the splendor of the former Temple. The Samaritans offered to aid the Jews, or probably asked permission to join them in the work. But Zerubbabel, fearing the result of an alliance with this mongrel race and their religion, indignantly rejected the proposal. Enraged at this refusal the Samaritans used their influence with the king and, through defamatory letters, stopped the work for sixteen years. Then, encouraged by the prophecy of Haggai and Zechariah, they renewed their efforts to build. This new effort led to an investigation that discovered the original decree of Cyrus, and brought forth a decree from Darius by which they were assisted in finishing the work. While the work of building the Temple was delayed, they built for themselves houses, some of which seemed too fine when compared with God's house. And besides this, they became satisfied with their condition, and were about to give up the whole of the Temple enterprise. As in our day, too

much comfort for self endangers our religious zeal. (2) Rebuilding of the walls. The rebuilding of the walls was accomplished through Nehemiah, the cup-bearer of the Persian king. Through a group of Jews arriving from Jerusalem, he learned of the ruin of Jerusalem and its walls. He was deeply moved, and sought and obtained from the king permission to go and rebuild the city. Armed with the king's commission as governor, and with orders for the necessary materials with which to make the wall, he went to Judea, and with a deep conviction that the time had come to remove the reproach of the beloved city burning in his soul, he called together the people, and inspired them to united action. All classes entered into the task with a loyalty and cooperation that is most inspiring. Nehemiah was the leader in it all. He made all the plans, directed all the workers, led them in the defence of themselves, and conducted all the diplomatic negotiations. He planned the work so as to create a spirit of rivalry and common loyalty, and secured both efficiency and protection through the enforcement of military rule. He met and successfully grappled with strong opposition in the form of ridicule, threats, mockery, plots and dangerous false accusations of rebellion. He kept his head and kept busily at work, and in fifty-two days was able to mend all the breaches and finish the wall. For twelve years he remained as governor of the Jews and then returned to Persia. Later he returned to Jerusalem and carried out some far-reaching reforms.

The completion of the Temple and of the wall were made the occasions of great religious festivities. Each was a time of great joy and thanksgiving, and was made the occasion of making sacrifices of worship to God. This renewal of their ancient shrine and national worship drew back from the lands of captivity many devout and patriotic Jews who longed for the religious ceremonies of the former days.

240. **The Reforms of Ezra.** Ezra, a learned scribe, secured permission from Artaxerxes to go to Jerusalem and carry with him such as desired to go, and also to collect money necessary to the work in the city, and to appoint judges and magistrates to execute the law of

Moses. Upon arrival he found, from information given by the princes, that his people had not separated themselves from the people of the land. Even the priests and Levites had intermarried with them and had done according to their abominations. He saw the serious consequences that would grow out of this laxity, and rent his clothes and tore his hair, and sat in an attitude of astonishment until the time of evening worship, and then prayed to Jehovah about it. He so impressed the people that he was asked by them to set the situation in order. He then appointed a commission which, in the course of three months, carried out a most drastic reform, requiring all who had these strange wives to be separated from them.

This reform has led many to think that the story of Ezra has been misplaced and should come after Nehemiah instead of before it. It is difficult to see how the mixed marriages with which Nehemiah had to deal would have been so great a problem, if the sweeping reforms of Ezra had taken place thirteen years before. The facts all seem to fit much better into the circumstances, when Ezra's work is viewed, as following that of Nehemiah. Several points are important: (1) The memoirs of Nehemiah never mention Ezra. We can hardly imagine, if the building of the Temple and his great reforms had just been concluded when the work of Nehemiah began, that he would have made no mention of it. (2) When Ezra appears the wall seems already to have been built (Ezra 9: 9). This was certainly built by Nehemiah. (3) The order of the high priests indicates that Nehemiah was before Ezra. Eliashib was high priest at the time of the building of the wall by Nehemiah (Neh. 3: 1, 20, 21; 13: 4, 7). But Johanan, the grandson of Eliashib, was high priest in the time of Ezra (Grandson, Neh. 12: 22; 13: 28. High priest in the time of Ezra. 10: 6). These, and other less impressive facts, would place the work of Ezra (Chs. 7: 10) after that of Nehemiah. Such a conclusion would, in no way, affect the reliability of the Scripture sections involved. It would probably indicate that the writer was not interested in the chronology of the event, which, through

all the future, wielded such an influence upon the lives of the Jews.

241. **The Reforms of Nehemiah.** The cruelty and hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders of this time are quite like that exposed in Isaiah, Ch. 56. They were sordidly selfish and tried to cover up their practises of injustice with mere rounds of ceremonial observances. In chapter five it is recorded that Nehemiah discovered how the very poor had been compelled to sell their children into slavery to the rich and ruling classes, and that, to pay their tax, they had been compelled to mortgage their inherited lands. He gathered the people together and unsparingly denounced them for their conduct. He then caused the law to be read by Ezra and other helpers to all the people, and caused them to covenant to keep it. The stirring events recorded here, together with his ability to point them to his own example of keeping the law which he was demanding of them, mark him as a real reformer, and enabled him to accomplish several important reforms. (1) He expelled from the precincts of the Temple, Tobiah, the Ammonite, who was already known to him to be dangerous to Israel, and whose room was needed for storing the tithes brought to the Temple for the Levites. (2) He appointed a wise committee composed of a priest, a scribe and a Levite, to whom was intrusted the task of receiving and distributing these tithes, 13: 13. (3) He reestablished the authority of the Sabbath, causing them properly to observe it, 13: 15-22. (4) He demanded a cessation of marriage with Gentiles, 13: 23-27, and thereby aided in keeping pure the blood of the Jews. In both of these he was simply enforcing the law long since recognized among them. In this connection he expelled from Judah the grandson of the high priest, who had married the daughter of Sanballat and refused to separate from her

242. **Significance of the Work of Ezra and Nehemiah.** The building of the Temple and wall did much to revive the spirit and hope of the Jews. A new sense of national importance was born and the community became hopeful, self-respecting and aggressive. Nehemiah was so patriotic and zealous, so full of wisdom and friendliness,

and so spiritual that he left nothing undone that would make for their future good. He was able to establish a closer relation between the Jews of Palestine and those of the dispersion, and, thereby, opened the way for the establishment of principles held by such leaders as himself. He enforced the moral and social ideas of the earlier prophets and of the ancient law of the fathers. Above all, he set a new example of devotion for all the laymen of his race, and thereby made a profound impression for good upon all later generations.

The evident purpose which these two reformers held in mind was to make Israel a pure and holy people. They did not want them to fall again into those sins which had brought upon them their national calamity. They defined duty in terms of ceremonial, instead of moral, acts and called the people to return to the other and more primitive forms of religion. To thus save and restore them: (1) They made the Temple and its attractive services the center of the life of the people, and, by means of ceremonial barriers, kept all possible pollution from it. (2) They provided for the purity of the priesthood, and made regulation for food, and the touching of unclean things by which the people should ceremonially be kept clean. (3) They prohibited intermarriage with heathen peoples, and enforced the proper observance of the Sabbath. The practical effect of all this was to increase greatly the number of the priests and Levites, to increase the Temple dues, and to make religion a matter of form. It furnished the foundation upon which was built that Judaism which was so antagonistic to Christianity during the time of Jesus and his apostles.

243. **Origin of Tradition.** As already indicated, the synagogue and its worship arose during the period of the captivity and became a prominent religious influence during the restoration. The zeal of Ezra in the study of the book of the law gave the people a new devotion, at least for the letter of the law, and the reading and expounding of the law became a profession, those following it being called "lawyers." Gradually they came to believe that God had communicated to the fathers other laws which could only be preserved by tradition.

This unwritten law was the "traditions of the elders" which Jesus so thoroughly condemned. These traditions soon took precedence over the written law, and became the excuse for much of the unreasonable and wicked conduct of the times. During the second century after Christ these traditions were collected and put into writing, the book containing them being called the Mishna. Commentaries have been written on the Mishna, and the two (Mishna and Commentary together) entirely eliminated the spirit of the law and the prophets, and tended to substitute the form and act for the reality and religious feeling behind it. But in spite of its onesided development, Judaism, thus inaugurated by Ezra, preserved a vital and real religious spirit, and handed down to us the noblest spiritual treasures known to the race.

244. **Contemporary History and Religion.** Several nations and religions need to be considered.

(1) **The history.** During the reign of Darius war was begun between Persia and Greece, and after fifty-one years peace was concluded by Artaxerxes on terms so unfavorable to the Persians that the glory of the empire of Cyrus began to fade, and Greece entered upon the most brilliant period of her history. It was distinguished by such men as Cimon, Pericles, Phidias, Simonides, Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Herodotus. It was during the reign of Artaxerxes that Socrates gathered material for his philosophy, and Plato began to flourish. But vice and folly manifested themselves. The Peloponnesian war began and finally ended in the fall of Athens, a prophecy of the coming ruin of Greece. Here Egypt became a Persian province, and never again reached her former glory. She was famed, however, for her wisdom and still attracted many illustrious men. Lycurgus and Solon, the Grecian legislators, and Pythagorus and Plato, the philosophers, all went there to drink at her fountains of learning. The influence of her mental culture was very great. So valuable were the services of the Tyrians to Darius in fitting out ships with which to contend with Athens that he restored to her the privileges which Nebuchadnezzar

had taken away seventy years before. She now was free and had her own king and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah (23: 17). About this time Carthage became famous for maritime enterprises; became acquainted with Britain; conducted a fleet with settlers, reaching an island near Albion, and, through trade and conquest, became the dominant power over Western Europe and Northern Africa. Her wars in an effort to secure the island of Sicily brought her into contact with Rome and accomplished her ruin. About the time Zerubbabel finished the Temple at Jerusalem, Rome abolished the kingly government, and substituted that of the consuls. Coriolanus was banished about the time that Xerxes invaded Greece, and Cincinnatus was appointed Dictator of Rome about the time Ezra was preparing to return to Jerusalem. There was strife between patricians and plebeians, but the nation was rising that should rule when the Messiah came.

(2) **The religion.** China and India were two other nations of this period. They do not touch Israel in any political way, but their three religions are important: (a) Brahminism. This religion had long been established in India and was a system of pantheism which had its sacred books or Vedas. (b) Buddhism. About the time of the captivity in Babylon, Brahminism had become so corrupted that a reformation of it was attempted. The result of this is Buddhism, which was adopted by the Hindu people, and which, in the eighth century of the Christian era, was driven from India. It became established in Tibet, Ceylon, China and Eastern countries and had become the religion of a great portion of the race. (c) Confucianism. While the effort was being made to reform Brahminism, Confucius was trying to reform Taoism, the national faith of China, and gave us Confucianism. While making many reforms along the line of morals, he, like the others, showed the failure of human religions to save a people.

245. **Significance of the Period.** In all the annals of national life there is probably not a more significant sweep of history than that of the Jews during the restoration, a little more than ninety years. With the captivity their national life had ceased, and now that they

were back in their own land they did not seem to make any attempt to reestablish the nation. They were but a fragment of vast empires. Stress was now put upon the true worship of God and it was beginning to dawn upon them that the glory of God would be manifested in some higher and more spiritual sense than had been expected. They had seen the decay of the mightiest material kingdoms, while spiritual Israel lived on, and were seeing how God and his cause, and those whom his power saves, cannot die. With the loss of national independence, they became more exclusive. They now held to the unity and spirituality of God and were the hope of the race. The Old Testament, therefore, closes with the Jews back at their old home, with the Temple restored, with the sacred writings gathered together, with the word of God being taught, and with the voice of the living prophet still in the land. After this followed a somewhat varied history of about 400 years, through all of which the light of the hope of the coming Messiah never died out. They were divinely preserved until their hopes were realized in the promised son of David and Son of God, and in his religion of universal love and peace. Then their nation was swept away in the storm of war waged by Titus and his legions.

246. **Other Books.** The time of the restoration produced four other books, and closed the Old Testament canon. One, the book of Esther, stands out alone, having no apparent connection with the other books of the Bible. Two of the prophetic books belonging here, Haggai and Zechariah, have already been mentioned. The other, Malachi, closes the Old Testament. These books give us little direct historical information, but imply much concerning the conditions that existed. The social and moral and religious evils, which the prophets attacked and set themselves to correct, indicate an unhappy state of mind, as well as a national lapse, that is altogether unpromising.

247. **The Story of Esther.** The story of Esther belongs to the time of the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity. Esther stands as the principal character, but the whole story turns upon the actions of Mor-

decai, who might well be the hero. He introduced Esther into the court and, thereby, was the cause of her becoming queen. He refused to bow down to Haman, which would have been an act of worship, thereby risking his life rather than worship any other than Jehovah. He influenced Esther to go before the king and plead for the life of the Jews, which resulted in a successful defence of themselves against their enemies. He received the honors of the king after the condemnation of Haman. It contains many surprising and sudden changes. Vashti, the queen, is suddenly put away and Esther, an unknown Jewish girl, is made queen. Mordecai is in ill-favor and is nigh to execution, but is suddenly exalted by the king with ceremonies led by his bitterest enemies. Haman is hung upon the gallows he had built for Mordecai. The Jews are all condemned to die and by the permission of the king fell upon their enemies and destroyed them. King Ahasuerus of the book is thought to be Xerxes the Great. On this view the events narrated occurred some time before the second colony came to Jerusalem and the story would fall between chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Ezra. The book throws much light on the condition of the Jews in captivity, and also upon the social and political condition existing in the Persian Empire at this time. It shows that a vast majority of them remained in Babylon when Cyrus allowed those who desired to return to Jerusalem. While the name of God does not occur in the book, his providential care over his people is everywhere manifested. The deliverance of the Jews from death by the intercessions of Esther became the occasion of the establishment of the Feast of Purim, which ever after commemorated it in Jewish history (Esther 9: 30-32) and was observed March 14 and 15.

248. **The Prophets of the Period.** Besides Haggai and Zechariah which have already been mentioned Malachi belongs here and closes the Old Testament Canon. The social, moral and religious evils which these prophets attack and try to correct, indicate the unhappy state of mind and a national lapse that is not promising for the restored people.

(1) **Haggai and His Message.** The prophet was born in Babylon and was one of those who returned from captivity, under Zerubbabel, according to the decree of Cyrus. He prophesied during the period of the rebuilding of the temple, as recorded in Ezra and he was the first prophet called to prophesy after the Jews returned from the captivity in Babylon. He began his teaching sixteen years after the return of the first band to Jerusalem. Under the decree of Cyrus, king of Persia, Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David, had led a company of captives back to Jerusalem. They had set up the altar and work on the Temple had been begun, but the work had been interrupted by the hostile Samaritans and others and for about fourteen years almost nothing had been done. These years of inactivity had dulled their zeal and they were rapidly becoming reconciled to the situation and by reason of their weakness, compared with the great task before them, they were beginning to despair of seeing their people and beloved city and Temple restored to that glory pictured by former prophets. The purpose of the prophecy was to restore the hope of the people and to give them zeal for the cause of God. This was accomplished by means of four distinct visions, each of which shows their folly in not completing the work, and promises divine blessing. They hear God say, "I am with you, and will bless you." The result is seen in that the people were aroused and are enabled, in spite of opposition, to finish and dedicate it in about four years. Three divisions are: (1) An appeal to rebuild the temple, Ch. 1. (2) The new temple, 2: 1-19. (3) The Messianic Kingdom, 2: 20-23.

(2) **Zechariah and His Message.** His name means "Remembered of the Lord" and like Haggai he appears to have been among the captives who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel. He was a co-laborer with Haggai, beginning his work two months later and continuing into the second year following him. The conditions of the times were the same as those described in Haggai. The book opens with a call to repentance which is followed by eight visions all of which are calculated to encourage the Jews to finish the temple and to rebuild the city and to re-establish their old religion and government. This discussion emphasizes the essential

of their religion and promises them great exaltation. This is recorded in the first eight chapters while chapters 9-14 have to do with matters that lead up to the triumph of Kingdom. The book is distinguished for the symbolic character of its visions, for the large place given to mediation in intercourse with God and for the richness of Messianic predictions. There are also reflections of a moral and spiritual nature, denunciations against some contemporary nations and discussions about keeping up the days of fasting and humiliation observed during the captivity. Here is an outline that will be helpful. (1) The horseman, four horns and carpenters, Ch. 1. (2) The man with the measuring line, Ch. 2. (3) Joshua, the high priest and Satan, Ch. 3. (4) The golden candlestick, Ch. 4. (5) The flying roll, the woman and ephah, Ch. 5. (6) The four war-chariots, Ch. 6. (7) Requirements of the law and the restoration and enlargement of Israel, Chs. 7, 8. (8) The Messianic king, Chs. 9, 10. (9) The rejected Shepherd, Ch. 11. (10) The restored and penitent people, Chs. 12, 13. (11) The divine sovereignty, Ch. 14.

(3) **Malachi and His Message.** His name means "Messenger of the Lord" or "MY Messenger." He was connected with the reform movement of Nehemiah and Ezra, and condemned the same sins which they condemned. He must, therefore, have lived about 100 years after Haggai and Zechariah, or about 430-420 B.C. He was the last of the Old Testament inspired prophets. The people had been restored to Jerusalem and the temple and wall had been rebuilt. Their interpretation of the glowing prophesies of the exilic and preexilic prophets had led them to expect to realize this expectation together with their unfavourable crops and certain inequalities of life which they saw led them first of all to be greatly discouraged. This in turn led them to become sensual and neglectful of their duty and finally to grow doubtful (2: 17) and to doubt divine justice. They did not become idolatrous, but neglected vital religion and replaced true piety with mere formalism and worldliness crept into the life of the people. Their evil conduct became such as we see today in communities that claim to be Christian. Malachi rebuked the people for departing from the law of Moses and called them back

to God. He denounced their mixed and impure marriages, their lack of personal godliness, their failure to pay the tithe and their skepticism. He unsparingly denounced the indifference and hypocrisy of the priests. In all of it he was trying to revive their national spirit. In this effort to revive their hopes he foretold of the coming of the Messiah and forerunner and described the manner of their coming. As a prophet he was devoted and very enthusiastic and fervent, but was also very formal in his method. He was remarkably universal in his attitude and feelings and rejoiced that Jehovah was being honored out in the Gentile world (1: 11). He lays emphasis on such great teachings of repentance together with the prosperity that will follow it. He portrayed the "day of the Lord" with its judgments and the world-wide future. Read the book by this simple outline. (1) God's love for Israel, 1: 1-5. (2) Their polluted offerings, 1: 6 end. (3) The sins of the priests, 2: 1-9. (4) Their heathen marriages and their divorces, 2: 10-16. (5) The separation of the righteous from the wicked, 2: 17; 3: 6. (6) The effect of their paying or withholding tithes, 3: 13; 4: 6.

249. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) God will use as his instruments others than his own people—see Cyrus and Artaxerxes. (2) God's work is both: (a) constructive, as when he is building up, inspires edicts and qualifies workers, and (b) destructive, as when he overcomes opposition. (3) A consecrated man is courageous and uncompromising, but none the less cautious. See Nehemiah. (4) There is a wise providence of God that includes all nations and displays perfect righteousness, perfect knowledge and perfect power. See the book of Esther, also the others. (5) Contentment may be false and harmful. See Haggai and Zechariah. (6) The comparative strength of the friends and enemies of a proposition does not determine the results. God must also be considered. (7) It pays to serve God, the moral Governor of the world. See Malachi. (8) The safety of a people demands that the marriage relation shall be sacredly regarded. (9) A rigid observance of the Sabbath is vital to the growth and well-being of a nation. (10) Mere forms of religion are displeasing to God un-

less accompanied by ethical lives. (11) Rulers that oppress the poor court divine disfavor.

250. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Lessons given in the last paragraph. (2) The decree of Cyrus. (3) The adversaries of Judah (Ezra Ch. 4; Neh. Ch. 4)—who they were and what they did. List and discuss them. (4) Compare one by one the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah. (5) Nehemiah's plan of work in rebuilding the Temple. (6) Traits of character displayed by Vashti, Mordecai, Esther and Haman. (7) The spirit of the return. Compare with the story of Ezra. (Isa. Chs. 40, 48; 20: 21; Dan. 9: 20; Ps. 137) and point out: (a) the religious impulse, (b) the national pride, (c) the local attractions. (8) The rebuilding of the Temple and the wall. (9) The different sins rebuked by Malachi. (10) The kings of Babylon since Nebuchadnezzar. (11) The vision of Zechariah.

SECTION III. THE PERIOD FROM MALACHI TO CHRIST

251. **Close of Old Testament History.** We now come to the close of Old Testament history and prophecy. Ezra and Nehemiah were at Jerusalem, one as governor and the other as priest. Jerusalem and the Temple had been restored and the worship of Jehovah reestablished, but Judea was still under Persian rule. From this time to the opening of New Testament history, a period of about four hundred years, neither prophet nor inspired historian is found among the Jews and there is no further development of revealed religion. During this historical chasm Greece produced her great masterpieces of literature and art; Alexander made, Greek power and uplifting arts dominant in all Western Asia; Rome grew into the vast "Monarchy of the Mediterranean," and, by the development of her roads and laws and general civilization, made possible the easier and wider spread of the gospel in Christ's time. It was also a period of vast importance in the history of the chosen people, which, for the sake of convenience, is divided into four sections: (1) The Persian Period. (2) The Greek

Period. (3) The Period of Independence. (4) The Roman Period.

252. **Sources of Information.** For information concerning the condition of the Jews during this time we are dependent upon three main sources: (1) The Old Testament Apocrypha. That these uninspired Jewish writings are inferior to the inspired books of the Bible is seen in that the discoveries of archeology are constantly proving them to abound in errors, and are as constantly confirming the record of the Bible. But for purposes of history they are valuable, and especially the first Book of Maccabees. (2) The writings of Josephus. Josephus was a Jew, born in A.D. 37, who survived the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus A.D. 70, and wrote two very important works. These were "The Antiquities of the Jews," very valuable as a complete history of the Jews from the creation, and "The Jewish Wars," which tells the story of the Jews from B.C. 170 to his own time. (3) Greek and Roman writers, too numerous to discuss here.

253. **General Significance.** While there were here no creative impulses of idealism, it was a time of deep significance. The Jewish revelation was complete and perfect, but it needed to be interpreted and applied in meeting the needs of mankind. During this time, therefore, wise and consecrated teachers and thinkers were diligently trying to determine the duty of all men in all relations according to the great revelation. They saw no way for the fulfilment of their hopes of political and religious headship for the Jews, except through some catastrophic action of God, and hence it became a time of Apocalyptic thinking.

It was a time of great testing for Judaism. The struggle is a thrilling story and developed some good and some bad tendencies. Great men are not much seen, but professional parties and racial movements are prominent. However, they grew constantly stronger and were able to preserve for the world the spiritual treasures revealed to them. Their struggles led to all the bitter prejudice, splendid ideals, scorn of compromise, unholy pride, individual responsiveness to Jesus, and

religious indifference as a religious organization, so manifest in the time of Jesus. Among the most important developments was the new esteem in which the scribes were held as interpreters of the Law.

254. **Persian Rule** (B.C. 445—B.C. 332). The Persians continued their rule over Judea a little more than one hundred years after the close of Old Testament history. During this time little happened in Palestine which was of much interest. The outstanding kings were Artaxerxes I, Darius II, Artaxerxes II, Artaxerxes III, and Darius III. For the most part the Persian rule was mild, the Jews usually being ruled by their own priests, who were subject to the Syrian Satrap, or governor. Trouble continued with the Samaritans, who had opposed the rebuilding of the Temple and the wall. While not a highly intellectual people, the Persians were fond of poetry and art. They were highly successful as architects, and in their great palaces and tombs left a type of architecture that stands midway between the massive forms of Egypt and the perfect beauty of Greece. They do not seem to have been a literary people, only a few of their writings having come down to us. The most important of these is the collection of sacred books compiled by Zoroaster. Theirs was the purest of all the ancient religions, being a worship of one God. Darius, who was a Zoroastrian, introduced Monotheism, and until the Medes corrupted it with fire-worship, or Magianism, which they borrowed from the Scythians, Ormuzd, who represented the great principle of light, was worshiped.

255. **Greek Rule** (B.C. 332—167). Through Alexander the Great the vast Medo-Persian rule was brought to an end in the year 332 B.C., when he defeated Darius, captured Tyre, swept down through Palestine on his way to Egypt and inaugurated the period of Grecian supremacy. Josephus says that on meeting a priest outside of Jerusalem, Alexander was deeply impressed, and not only spared the city from being plundered, but went into the Temple and worshiped. At any rate he seems to have formed a good opinion of the Jews, regarded them as good citizens, granted them privileges as first-

class citizens of Alexandria, his capital, and encouraged them to settle throughout his empire. Such opportunities were offered them in Alexandria, that it became the center of a large Jewish population and a celebrated seat of Jewish learning. After the death of Alexander (B.C. 323) there was about twenty years of struggle among his generals over the partition of his empire before anything like order was restored. The result was four separate kingdoms (Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt), with the result that Judea was alternately under the rule of Syria and Egypt. (a) Under Egypt. After some struggle between Seleucus and Ptolemy, Egypt, with its new capital, Alexandria, was won by Ptolemy, and Alexandria soon became the literary and commercial center of all the East. Ptolemy also wrested Palestine from Seleucus, and for about a century (to B.C. 204) gave the Jews a very prosperous period. It was while Judea was under the rule of Ptolemy that the Septuagint version of the Old Testament was made. It was done by order of Ptolemy Philadelphus that a copy might be placed in the great Alexandrian library. This translation made possible the reading of the Hebrew Scriptures in the Greek language and was one of the greatest missionary works of all times. (b) Under Syria. In 204 B.C. the Seleucidae again recovered Palestine and it came again under the rule of Syria. This was in many ways the darkest period of the whole four hundred years. The Seleucidae were the most cruel tyrants, and tried in every way possible to destroy the Hebrew spirit and religion, and to transform the nation into Greeks. The period lasted until B.C. 167.

256. **Hebrew Independence** (B.C. 167—63). This is commonly called the Maccabean period. In 170 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes began to oppress the Jews in an attempt to force them into idolatry. On one occasion, when he returned from defeat in Egypt, he vented his feeling of vengeance on Jerusalem. He slew forty thousand of its people, stripped the Temple of its treasures, sacrificed a sow on the altar, and sprinkled the interior of the Temple with a portion of the liquor in which the unclean beast had been boiled. He shut up the Temple and, on pain of death, prohibited all Jewish religion, and

many heroically gave up their lives rather than their faith. About 167 B.C. Judas Maccabeus began to lead a revolt which two years later was successful in throwing off the foreign yoke and establishing the independence of the Jews. They were now governed by a succession of rulers from the Maccabean family for a period of one hundred years. These rulers performed the double function of both civil and ecclesiastical head of the people. They reopened and cleansed and rededicated the Temple, in honor of which the Feast of Dedication continued to be observed (Jno. 10: 22). They were descendants of David, and under their leadership Edom, Samaria and Galilee were added to their territory, and much of the splendor and wealth of the golden days of the kingdom was restored.

This period gave rise to three great parties, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, that afterward distinguished Judaism. These parties represent the different currents of thought and diverse points of view that had grown up during the Greek period. They are also the expression of the democratic spirit of Israel as seen in the extreme idealists, legalists and men of practical affairs. The Pharisees were essentially a religious group anxious for holiness and showed intense devotion to the Temple and its services to the practical exclusion of all other interests. They were in some degree progressives. While believing strictly in the ancient law they were progressive enough to believe that it needed interpretations to meet the new conditions in public and private life, and so developed the most democratic of the parties of Judaism. They insisted upon the most rigorous ceremonialism, but accepted the common people as their allies, and, as the missionary party, thus kept in close touch with the masses. They believed in the spiritual realm, in the resurrection and future life. The Sadducees appreciated the good things of life, were devoted to the Scriptures, and had great admiration for the priests. They were a political rather than a religious party, but were opportunists and would espouse any policy that promised to advance their private or class interests. They stood for the ancient Scriptures, but had no sympathy for the interpretations and teachings

of the Pharisees. While conservative in theory they were, of all the parties, the most open to Greek and heathen influence. The Essenes were a less important sect. They were spiritual idealists, characterized by their humility, fraternity, and practical charity. They represented a reaction from the prevailing corruption toward the simple life.

The fall of this Jewish kingdom was brought about by several causes. First of all, the Maccabean leaders became material and selfish in their ideals and ambitions. Greed for power and the temptations of success soon destroyed their early patriotism. Their spiritual teachers were overcome by the material spirit of the age. Corruption and tyranny soon caused the kings to mislead their nation. Out of all this arose the bitter struggles of their parties mentioned above. The policy of the Pharisees to gain peace at any cost opened the way by which Rome finally realized her ambition in the complete conquest of Palestine. Thus the kingdom, founded in the face of the greatest difficulties and consecrated with the lives of many of the noblest martyrs, fell in shame, a victim of the same evil causes that had, from the first, been the ruin of empires.

257. **Roman Rule** (B.C. 63—A.D. 70). (1) Pompey conquers Judea. The closing years of the Maccabean period were filled with strife and confusion. Different members of the Asmonean family sought the throne, plots and counter-plots and murders and appeals to the rising power of Rome were evidence of the evil plight of the nation. In B.C. 63 Pompey, at the end of the third Mithridatic war, overran Palestine, destroyed Jerusalem, forever put an end to the political independence of the Jews and brought them under Roman rule. (2) The struggle of the first twenty-five years of Roman rule was one of great difficulty. For a while the Asmoneans were continued as the rulers, but under the Roman governor of Syria. The Romans seemed to allow the Jews as much freedom as possible, but there was bitter resentment of Rome's interference. Within the brief period of about five years there were three rebellions. (a) That led by Alexander, B.C. 57. He surrendered at Alexandria, and the Jewish state was

divided into five districts, each of which was put under a local council of leading citizens. The Hellenic cities in and about Palestine were also restored and given a large measure of independence in the hope of neutralizing the Jewish national spirit. (b) That led by Aristobulus. This second rebellion quickly followed the first, and was as quickly ended when Aristobulus was captured at the fortress of Machaerus and sent as a captive to Rome. (c) The second rebellion under Alexander. This was more formidable and also more disastrous than the others. Two permanent results came from these uprisings—an increased Jewish hatred of Roman rule, and an increase of Rome's suspicion of these rebellious Jews. This suspicion enabled the Jewish party to force Pilate to destroy Jesus, who assumed the title of King of the Jews. (3) The Herodian rule. In B.C. 47 Herod the Great was appointed governor of Galilee, and in B.C. 40 the Roman senate made him king of Judea. It was, however, necessary for him to conquer Judea, and he did not accomplish this until B.C. 37 when he became ruler over all Palestine. For a century the Herodian family played a leading part in Jewish history. This century witnessed the birth and life and death of Jesus, and the widespread influence of the church under the leadership of Paul and his contemporaries. Herod himself had great genius for ruling, but was personally wicked, unscrupulous as to the means he used, and was insanely jealous and supicious. Many were the victims of his jealousy, among them his mother-in-law, his brother-in-law, his two sons and his wife, Marianne. It would be difficult to find in all history a greater domestic tragedy than that of the family of Herod, who slew those whom he loved best, and in his old age, was hated by most of his subjects. On the other hand, in order to court the favor of the Jews, he rebuilt their Temple, making it larger than Solomon's and much richer than Zerubbabel's. At the time of the coming of Jesus, Rome was the mistress of the world, and the nations were at peace.

258. **Changes Wrought.** From the time of the work of Nehemiah and the prophecy of Malachi to the coming of the Messiah, vast changes had taken place. Jerusa-

lem is not the same as the Jerusalem of former times. It has a foreign air with the manifestation on every hand of foreign pleasures, foreign languages and foreign customs. The Hebrews themselves had undergone many and significant changes. These changes may be indicated as follows: (1) Changes of occupation. At first they were farmers and herdsmen. Beginning in the time of Solomon and during the following kings they engaged some in foreign commerce. But, beginning with their captivity and dispersion, they became traders and have kept this disposition down to our modern era. (2) Changes in language. Beginning with the captivity changes in the language began to appear. Chaldean, Syrian and Persian forms crept in, and when Jesus came the classic language of Abraham and David was a dead language, and Aramaic had become the speech of Palestine. (3) Change in religion. The change in religion is manifested mainly in the religious, or politico-religious parties mentioned above. The spirit of rivalry and hatred among them developed a condition that had much to do with the defeat of the Hebrews, and much too do with their attitude toward Jesus when he came.

259. **Conditions at the End of the Period.** The conditions existing at the close of the period may be gathered, both from secular history and from the work and life of Jesus as they are seen operating either for or against the progress of his work. There are several points of view from which to consider these facts, but two views will satisfy our purpose: (1) Unpropitious conditions. Signs of decadence and gross errors were plainly evident. There was a defective view of God, whom they regarded as too far away. They laid too much stress on outward obedience and, thereby, left no place for motive in their service. This led them to rest salvation upon a system of works and to multiply rules of obedience. They made too great a demand for respect for the learned and for subordination to them. The Jews thought that they had a special place in the salvation of God and, as children of Abraham, only felt the need of national deliverance. (2) Hopeful signs. There was also much that was good. The Jews did have the truest conception of religion to be found anywhere in

the world. Their religion was a matter of deep concern to them, and they showed an undying devotion to their religious institutions. There was a keen sense of the worth of the individual. There were many synagogues, which led to a zeal to proselyte foreigners, and opened the way for Gentile evangelism. The home life of the Jews was strongly religious, and children were held in high esteem. There was a widespread expectation of the Messiah, whom the whole world could receive as its spiritual king.

260. **Conditions of the Gentile World.** The world at the end of this period was largely a Roman world, but two nations besides the Jews contributed to the world status found at its close. (1) The Greek nation. The Greeks had a genius for education and general culture, and gave to the world a demonstration of the highest cultural benefits. They also had a genius for commerce and trade, and dominated the world's traffic. Colonies of them were in all commercial centers and, being leaders, they soon made their language the language of trade. Thus they prepared the way for all men to understand a message delivered in their tongue. In the midst of it all they became a most corrupt people. There was luxurious living, and licentiousness knew no bounds. Viewed negatively the Greeks taught the world that it could not be saved by mere culture. Viewed positively they prepared and spread everywhere a language through which the world would receive the true message of its everlasting salvation. (2) The Roman nation. As indicated above, Rome had conquered the world and brought order out of confusion. World differences had been composed and national rivalries removed. There was the highest possible development of the perfection and power of law and arms. But here again was failure. There was corruption everywhere. The state of morals at the close of the period presents one of the darkest pictures of all history. On this side of it they had taught the world the utter futility of law and arms to save a nation from corruption. On the other hand, they had gathered up all the petty and jealous nations into one, and had brought about a world-freedom that greatly facilitated the spread of the mes-

sage of salvation during the time of the apostles. (3) The expectation of the coming prince. These failures of nations, and this darkness and guilt that prevailed in many parts of the world had led to a longing for some better state of things. There was a wide expectation of the coming of a glorious prince who would effect a mighty change for the better. There is no doubt that this expectation was brought about by the widespread influence of the Hebrew Scriptures, but it is interesting that at this time such an expectation should have been prominent in the thinking of so many people. About B.C. 40, Virgil in his fourth Eclogue predicted that an infant son of Pollio would bring to the world a reign of righteousness and bliss very similar to that which the Hebrew prophets ascribed to Christ. Tacitus and Suetonius, the Roman historians, inform us that at that time there was a common belief that a world ruler would spring up out of Judea. The visit of the Magi of the East to Jerusalem in search of the new-born king shows us that this same belief prevailed in the most primitive settlements of the human race. Such is the world-outlook at the end of this period.

261. **Teachings of the Story.** Already in the topics discussed above mention has been made of the outstanding lessons which the incidents of this study were calculated to bring to those who lived at the time. (1) It led them to look to the Scriptures for guidance in the conduct of life. (2) It showed that unreasonable tyranny will fail. It cannot crush the true spirit of religion. This is seen in their throwing off Grecian rule. (3) It taught the danger that may come to true religion as a result of a strong party spirit such as that shown by the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees. (4) That God uses the changing conditions of nations to forward his purposes. The changed condition of Israel, along with the world changes of which it was a part, made ready for Christ. (5) God's people were always truer in their conception than were any other people. No matter how sinful Israel was, she was still closer to God than other nations and had a greater grasp upon truth. (6) Desire for divine help is, however, not con-

fined to any one people. Others, as well as Hebrews, looked for a deliverer.

262. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The career of Alexander the Great. (2) The reign of Ptolemy Soter and Ptolemy Philadelphus in Egypt. (3) The acts of Antiochus Epiphanes. (4) The story of Judas Maccabeus. (5) The story of the subjection of Judea to Rome. (6) The persecution of the Jews under the several rulers of the different countries to which they were subject during this period. (7) The religious parties of the period, especially the Pharisees and the Sadducees. (8) Persian, Grecian and Roman religion.

SECTION IV. RELIGION DURING THE PERIOD

Religion in the entire period. Already either in the discussions, or through study based on the topics "For Written or Oral Discussion," we have seen something of the religion of the nations under which Israel has, during the period, been a colony. Now let us survey the conditions in Israel.

263. **During the Age of Exile.** One would expect that the exile would bring about some changes in matters of worship and in their most serious beliefs. Their loss of nationality led to a fuller appreciation of the deeper and more spiritual things. Their separation from the Holy Land and from the Sanctuary at Jerusalem led to the suspension of their system of sacrifices, and their great public ceremonies were replaced by private devotions. They especially emphasized the keeping of the Sabbath as a mark of distinction from others about them. Moreover, they were now forced to give their thought to the past and future instead of the present. This led to a better respect for the prophets, whose prophecies had come to pass, and whose prophecies alone gave them hope for the future. The prophets were, therefore, their most significant influence and their teachings may be grouped under two heads: (a) As to the character and attributes of Jehovah. First, his sole deity. Prior to this time they had believed in the superiority of Jehovah over all other gods. Indeed,

by the time of the Assyrian period they had practically become Monotheists, at least some of them. But during the exile his sole deity became a common topic. They expounded this doctrine, showing that they recognized him as Creator and Director of the physical world, and as also directing the fortunes of men and their only Saviour. With this new sense of his sole God-head came the scorn of idols, and a derision of all those who worshiped them. Second, his motive for blessing Israel. This greatness of Jehovah led to an understanding of the unworthiness of Israel. Jehovah's actions were controlled by motives within himself (Eze. 20: 14, 44). God had created Israel for his own praise and he is led to restore them because of the contempt which their exile has brought upon his name (Eze. 36: 20-23). It is for his own sake and not for theirs, that he recalls them (Is. 43: 25; 48: 9, 11; Eze. 36: 21, 32). This consideration shifted their thought from what he required of them to what he would do for them. Thus righteousness became rather what God bestowed upon them than what he demanded of them. (b) As to the relations of Jehovah to Israel and other peoples. First, concerning the restoration. Before the exile the restoration was prophesied, but it was beclouded with the more immediate concern about the intervening calamity. Now their suffering has already come and they foresaw the impending disaster of their oppressors. Indignation at the transgressions of Israel, found in the older prophets, was replaced by a sympathy for their sufferings, and a joy at their prospect of deliverance. Second, the prophets' attitude toward other nations. This attitude varies, but the most significant thing is the way they come in this period to emphasize the missionary purpose of Israel. God's people are to possess the nations. The nations of the world are to be converted to Jehovah, through Israel, his servant. This conception led them to missionary efforts, and many proselytes were made to their faith.

264. **After the Return from Exile.** The first thing to attract one's attention in the study of the after-exile religion is the increased importance of the power of the law, and the decreasing influence and importance of

prophecy. There were prophets during the restoration, but they were fewer, and their writings were scanty and of far less importance than those of former times. Along with this loss of influence by the prophet came a new influence for the priest. The very renewal of the covenant by Nehemiah and Ezra would bring a new influence for the law and for the priests, which its worship required, and would diminish the need of prophetic instruction. Three matters must be considered here: (a) The service and requirements of Jehovah. After the return from captivity the service and requirements of Jehovah were determined largely by the conditions confronting them, together with their experiences in Babylon. There was already a well-organized ecclesiastical system. Such a system seemed necessary to preserve the proper expression of their national faith. They had also gained a nobler sense of the contrast between Jehovah's holiness and Israel's sinfulness. All of this led the prophets to lay great stress upon the purity of worship. They saw in the lapse of the work on the Temple a lack of that devotion which was required and pleaded for its completion. After the Temple was completed Malachi pleaded for an elevation of the character of the worship. This demand for a greater respect for the ceremonies of religion led to an increased respect for its ministers. They not only would not have the ceremonies to degenerate into formalism, but would use them to express truth and to stimulate devotion. (b) The future destiny of Israel and other nations. In Haggai and Zechariah the other nations appear as the enemies of Israel and the prophets predict that they will be fearfully destroyed. This overthrow will be catastrophal in character. In Zechariah there are represented three conflicts (9: 13-17; 12: 1—13: 6; Ch. 14). In the first of these Israel will glut herself with her enemies' blood; in the second God will smite their enemies with madness and cause the inhabitants of Jerusalem to devour them; in the third, after they have suffered a certain defeat, Jehovah will go forth against their enemies and smite them with a plague, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall dwell in safety. (c) Special teachings. During this period there are two teachings which

seem to make an advance. First, that with reference to angels. Ezekiel, Zechariah and Daniel all refer to these intermediary beings. Some are given names; some seem to have higher rank than others, and some are represented as especially guarding the destinies of the various nations. Michael is the angel thus guarding Israel (Dan. 10: 21; 12: 1). Second, that with reference to the future life. This teaching has been met before in national and other symbols, or in figurative expression such as Hos. 6: 1-2; 13: 14; Eze. 37: 12; Isa. 65: 20. But in Daniel the literal resurrection seems to be predicted (12: 1-2) and includes both the righteous and the wicked.

265. **Jehovah's Servant.**

(1) **The servant pictures.** The prophetic teachings reach a still higher level in the prophecies which were intended to comfort them in their suffering. The prevailing conception had been that all suffering was the direct result of sin on the part of the sufferer. But the suffering of Israel would seem to be too great—that a nation, righteous compared with its Babylonian oppressor, should so suffer would be misunderstood. If affliction, however, could be thought of as unmerited and as conducive to the redemption of others, even of those who had occasioned the suffering, Israel's tribulation would then become a part of a divine plan of blessing, and she could find ground for joy in that.

To meet this need the conception of Israel as Jehovah's servant was proclaimed by Isaiah (41: 8; 44. 1, 21; 45: 4). What the prophets are to Israel, Israel is to be to the nations. They were to be teachers and missionaries of true religion to the world, and like the prophets, had been called and anointed of Jehovah for their task. This idea is elaborated in four passages commonly called "Servant Songs" (42: 1-7; 49: 1-6; 50: 4-9; 52: 13—53: 12). These songs unfold, in a gradual way, the broadening conception of this idea—that Jehovah's servant will accomplish the divine task by voluntarily and uncomplainingly enduring ignominy and suffering. In the first song (42: 1-7) the prophet describes the mission of the servant, and the persistence and undiscouraged way in which he will accomplish his work of de-

liverance and of establishing righteousness. In the second (49: 1-6) he emphasizes the world-wide mission of the servant who is represented as conscious of his divine call and equipment and protection, and as seeing through his temporary failure the ultimate success of his task. Here, for the first time, we meet the note of ignominy and shame which is the portion of Jehovah's true servant. In the third (50: 4-9), there is an elaboration of the sorrow and indignity which the servant must endure, but there is contrasted with it his unconquerable faith in God, and the certain success which is to come to his enterprise. In it all he is portrayed as a learner who is being prepared to become the teacher of men. In the fourth (52: 13—53: 12), the climax of this teaching is reached. The character, sufferings and destiny of the servant are described at length. Present shame and defeat are contrasted with the future glory and victory which he is to gain through his suffering.

(2) **The purpose of these prophecies.** These pictures embody the prophets' chief ideal. All their suffering is Jehovah's doing to the intent that the wicked may see their wicked way and turn to God and be saved. The purpose of these prophecies is summed up under four points: (a) To interpret the meaning of the adversity through which the Jewish race is passing. He makes it clear that they are the instrument of the divine will and are, by direct instruction, and through the impression made by their experiences, to bring to the nations the knowledge of the true God. (b) To inspire them to make the necessary sacrifices to prove themselves the true servants of Jehovah, even though they are maltreated and suffer national extinction. (c) To assure them that they will not enjoy a renewal of national life and have a place of honor and influence. (d) To clearly set forth the character of the services which Jehovah requires of his servant, Israel, whom he has chosen. Three distinct elements of their mission are emphasized: First, they were to free the prisoners from their captivity. This freedom included the deliverance of those who suffered behind walls and bars, and also those who were bound by fear and superstition. Second, they were to restore scattered Israel to a renewed national life,

and thus show the power of God to deliver and vindicate his people. Third, they were to break out beyond their own people, and bring to the nations of the world the knowledge and truth which God had imparted to them. There is laid the foundation for the work of the world-wide kingdom of Christ.

(3) **The interpretation of these stories.** The interpretation of these stories is still more profound. One asks who is this servant of Jehovah. The experiences certainly correspond in many ways to certain of the Old Testament leaders such as Jeremiah, who, though righteous, endured great suffering and, yet, by their sacrifices, brought healing to their race. Certainly Israel as a nation is primarily meant. Their experiences of suffering, opposition, ignominy and seeming failure furnish the standards of those who would live to elevate the standards of their associates to a realization of the divine ideals. The nation, as such, never did fulfill all this program. It found its real fulfilment in the sacrificial life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Messianic Kingdom. In representing Israel's suffering as vicarious the prophet was no doubt influenced by the sacrificial system of the Jews by which victims were offered in atonement for human sin. The New Testament frequently traces parallels between the experiences of Israel and incidents in the life of Jesus (Matt. 2: 16 with Hos. 11: 1; 1 Cor. 15: 4 with Hos. 6: 2). It makes special connection between Isa. 52: 13—53: 12 and the death of Christ (Acts 8: 30-35; 3: 18; 1 Cor. 15: 3; Mark 9: 12; 10: 45). Israel, through her exile and later restoration, promoted the same end in revealing the character and purposes of God that Christ on a higher plane accomplished by his death and resurrection. The conception, therefore, does not concern Israel alone, but is a part of the plan for the conversion of the world (Isa. 45: 20-23; 42: 1-4). It reaches the height of universalism which alone could be given proper significance through one even Jesus.

266. **The Messianic Hope.** In the discussion of the conditions at the end of the period above, in the statement of the purpose and teachings of the period, in the survey of the religion of the entire period and in the

study of Jehovah's servant, each was closed with an evident expectation of the coming of a Messiah. Indeed the whole general trend of Old Testament history and thought had been such as to stimulate an expectation of a condition that centered in the person of the Messiah. From time to time this hope concerning the future took very different forms. These forms naturally shade into each other and seem utterly confusing until three types of Messianic prophecies fundamentally different and represented by different types of thinkers are organized. (1) The kingly or nationalistic hope. This hope originated as soon as Israel became a nation. It was shaped by the early experiences of the nation, and looked for a renewal of the glory of the days of David. It looked for a Davidic king or ruler who, under divine blessing and protection, would direct the affairs of the repentant nation and bring in its golden age. This conception may be traced in many prophecies (Num. 24: 17-19; 2 Sam. 7: 10-16; Ezek. 37: 21-27; Isa. Chs. 9 and 11; Zech. 9: 9, 10). These expectations led the Zealots during the first century of Christianity to attempt by the sword to overthrow Rome and establish the Messianic Kingdom. It also led thousands of the common people to follow the false Messiahs who rose during the early Christian era. (2) The ethical and universalistic hope. This type thought that the nation through suffering and self-renunciation would be prepared to evangelize the world and bring it in repentance to the feet of Jehovah. This view is most fully represented by Isaiah in the discussion of Jehovah's servant studied in the last section. It regards the kingdom of God as a natural growth and sees men's characters gradually transformed by the influence of God's truth and Spirit. Israel, according to this view, was not to destroy other nations, but to carry them the light. It was more comprehensible and practicable and freer from racial barriers than the other forms of Messianic hopes. It saw an ever widening kingdom established without the use of the sword and dominated by the principles of justice, mercy and service. (3) The catastrophic or apocalyptic hope. This type looked for Jehovah to intervene and destroy the wicked, so that Israel could do her work. As

the nationalistic hope centers in the Son of David, this type centers in the Son of man. This was a hope not for a temporal, but for a supernatural kingdom and was usually described in symbolic language. It would in no way depend upon man, or his instrumentality, but solely upon God. Indeed, it took away all national and individual responsibility, and expected that God would displace the earthly world with a heavenly one and change mortality to immortality. Old things would pass away and a new system come in their place. This conception is found in Ezekiel, Zechariah and Joel, each of whom looked forward to a miraculous, universal and eternal kingdom. It found its highest Old Testament expression in Daniel. It was the view of the Pharisees and Essenes. It constantly manifested itself in the apostles during Christ's time, and is seen in the writings of Paul and other New Testament writers, and finds large expression in the Revelation of John. (4) Their combined significance. These different views all have in them a basis for thought, and all together form the well-rounded and complete view of the Messianic time and accomplishment. To emphasize any one of them to the exclusion, or to the disparagement, of the others would be to have a narrow and limited conception. There is, without doubt, a kingly element in this hope. It is equally certain that there is a gradual growth of the kingdom and no less true that the catastrophic finds place in the divine working out in the lives of men and nations of a great divine purpose, and that he is back of all history, both as a God of power and of love. All of these ethical and spiritual ideals found their noblest expression in Jesus, whose character and teachings fulfilled the highest Messianic hopes and will ultimately accomplish all of its implications. Such a hope and such a fulfilment of that hope is the end toward which Old Testament thought had moved.

Here, then, our task has ended. For, although the historical movement has not ceased, Christianity is the outcome of Old Testament history. Here we pause with the defeated peoples of earth searching with wistful eyes the eastern heavens for the appearing of the Day Star from on high to appear and looking for "the Desire of all nations" to come.

MAP OF PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

CHAPTER VI

THE INAUGURATION OF CHRISTIANITY BY JESUS

Matthew—John.

From the Birth of Jesus to His Ascension

SECTION I. INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

267. **The Pre-eminence of Christ.** We come now to the central figure of all time and of all eternity. (1) He is the pivotal man of all history. All time is measured from him. Every historical event is located by the number of years before or since Christ. Every time we date a letter we pay tribute to Jesus who stands as the beginning of our present era. (2) He is the one all absorbing theme of the Bible. He is the "seed of the woman" who should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3: 15) and the covenant "seed" of Abraham in whom all nations should be blessed (Gen. 12: 1-3). He is the fulfilment of all the Jewish ceremonials and sacrifices. They point all the time to him as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." All these lines of types as well as multitudes of prophetic prediction looked forward to his coming. The New Testament as certainly has him for its great theme. In part it tells of his life and teachings, and the rest of it has to do with the spread of his influence through the work and teaching of his disciples. (3) He is the central theme in all eternity. If we go back into the vast eternity of the past, he stood as a "Lamb slain" from before the foundation of the world. All the great divine plans centered in him. At the present we preach Christ,

believe Christ, are baptized in his name, keep the Supper in memory of his death and observe the Lord's day in memory of his resurrection. If we look forward to the great future eternity we hear the redeemed singing the praises of him who "loved us and gave himself for us and washed us in his own blood and hath made us priests and kings unto God" (Rev. 1: 5-6). Such is the transcendent Person who is the subject of our study in this chapter. This pre-eminence is seen in his character, in his intellectuality, in his plans, in his power and in the permanence of his kingdom of peace.

268. **Long Preparation for His Coming.** It has already been indicated that from eternity all things have looked toward his coming. There has been an over-ruling providence that directed all things and all nations to prepare the way for his appearance. We can best see this providential preparation by the study of the Greek, Roman and Hebrew nations. (1) The Greeks prepared a beautiful language, well suited for the expression of spiritual truth which God used for the vehicle of the gospel message, and then as traders and colonizers, secured its universal adoption. Though possessed of the very highest culture and civilization, the nation fell, and showed that more than culture is needed to save a people. Their failure cried out for help from above and left the world helpless and ready to accept the Saviour. (2) The Romans formed a world government, thereby removing the petty jealousies of small and conflicting nations. They built great highways, and in both of these things contributed largely to the spread of the gospel throughout the world. In the meantime the nation went down in corruption and defeat, and showed the world that law and arms could not save a nation, and helped to prepare for the reception of help from without. (3) The Hebrews gave to men the true conception of God and his worship. They translated the Scriptures into Greek, and through this Septuagint translation, gave the civilized world the Hebrew Scriptures in its own tongue. Through the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities and the conquest, they were scattered throughout the Roman world, into which Jesus was born. They carried with them

their synagogues and made proselytes and were a seed plot for the gospel wherever the apostles of Jesus worked. The fact that the nation perished was proof that they needed something more than their great religious ceremonies and gaudy ritual to save them. They, too, had showed the need of some Deliverer.

Added to all this providential preparation, there was a long line of prophecies that had promised the coming of one anointed of God to save them. These had been announced to comfort Israel in her distress, and had created in them a definite expectation of a Deliverer. A few of the more important and more specific prophecies are: the town in which he should be born (Mic. 5: 2); the family (Isa. 11: 1); the tribe (Gen. 49: 10); as a man (Gen. 3: 15); as suffering Saviour (Ps. 22: 16); the triumph of the King and Kingdom (Isa. 9: 6, 7; Zech. 9: 10; Dan. 7: 13, 14). There is, in all this matter, a remarkable unity of prediction.

269. **Condition of the Age.** It is highly important, if we are to understand Jesus and much of the work and teaching, both of himself and of his disciples, that we know something of the times in which they lived. Two groups of facts are outstanding. (1) Some things that are dark and prophetic of evil. There was a defective view of God whom they regarded as far away and of little loving interest in man; there was too much stress on outward acts of duty without regard for the motive of action; salvation then was a matter of works; there were many bad laws growing out of the system of works that grew up; there was too low an estimate of people other than the Jews; worship was corrupt, the gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Romans and Babylonians, practising and leading their followers to indulge in most disgraceful practices; human life was considered of little value; slavery was widespread and cruel; their pleasures were evil, cruel and blood-thirsty. (2) Some things that have in them promise of good. The Jews had the highest conception of God and of their obligation to him of any people in the world; their religion was a matter of profound concern and they showed an undying devotion to it; there was a keen sense of the worth of the individual, which opened the

way for the appeal of the gospel; there was a fine zeal to win others for their faith, which was the forerunner of Gentile evangelism; there was a splendid sense of interest in the poor and oppressed which by this time had come to look for the Messiah or Deliverer.

At the time of Christ's coming the world was outwardly prosperous. The arts and sciences had reached a high degree of development and everything seemed prosperous and happy. Inwardly there was corruption and decay. Their religion was at a low level, and the whole world was sinking into moral degradation. There was no real safety anywhere to be found.

270. **Life of the People.** Several matters belonging to the ordinary and every day life of the people should be held constantly in mind. (1) As to their education. It was not an illiterate age, and the average intelligence was unusually high. There were great universities, such as those at Athens, Tarsus, Pergamum and Alexandria; and great libraries, such as those at Alexandria and Pergamum. There were schools of oratory, such as that at Rhodes, and many special lecturers on oratory and philosophy, who traveled from city to city. While the glory of Greek culture and the golden age of Latin literature had closed, many writers then and later showed that these languages had not yet lost their power. Great changes had come in the language of the Hebrews. Classic Hebrew was a dead language, and Aramaic was the common language of Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era. (2) As to Philosophy. Greek philosophy had taken a very practical turn, the Stoics and Epicureans with their two systems dividing honors for popular favor. These systems grew up as a revolt against the speculations of such philosophers as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. The one taught self-control and the rejection of all that is pleasurable; the other taught that pleasure is of chief importance and should be sought at all cost. One led to asceticism and the other to a widespread immorality and lewdness. Even their religion was made the ground of the vilest possible conduct. Certain Alexandrian Jews of culture, such as Philo tried to combine this Greek philosophy with the Old Testament teaching. (3) As to society.

Of the eighty-five million people in the Roman empire six millions were slaves and a large class of freedmen who had bought their freedom or had been emancipated. The free-born plebeians held themselves above both freedmen and slaves. There was no middle class—only the few very rich and the many very poor. The nobles were wildly extravagant while the masses were ground to the earth. People crowded the great cities. Trade guilds were organized as a defense against capitalists. There were fraternal organizations and various types of traveling craftsmen. The race problem was very acute—the Jews holding themselves aloof from the Gentiles, the Greeks calling all others barbarians, and Roman citizens counting themselves above all who were not Romans. A caste system based upon money and power dominated everything. (4) As to business activity. The Roman conquest of the Mediterranean world had brought about great business activity. The doors of commercial opportunity were open all over the world. Trade came from India, from Spain, and even from Britain. Merchants traveled for business. There were factories, wholesale houses, barbers, and great business enterprises like those of to-day. (5) As to its militarism. The army dictated to the people, the navy cooperating. The army became mercenaries, or hired soldiers, and in time dictated to the emperors and overrode the power of the senate. This militarism which had made Rome, finally sapped her life away and could not hold what it had won. In Samaria and Judea, at the time of Christ, the army took orders from the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. The garrison at Jerusalem consisted of one Roman cohort of from 500 to 600 men which was increased in the time of the principal feasts. They were probably recruited from that country and came largely from the Samaritans. (6) As to the condition of woman. The condition of the Jewish women was fortunate compared with those in other oriental countries. Motherhood was highly honored and children were welcomed as indicating the favor of God. Women were not slaves, but were the homemakers and teachers of the young. While one did occasionally rise to a position of leadership, the women of

Palestine never won the position of freedom that Christianity has given her. Jesus broke over the prejudices of the time in his attitude toward her.

271. **The Land of Palestine.** The land where Jesus was born and lived had been made sacred through fifteen centuries of association with patriarchs, kings and prophets of the old covenant. The national scenery is the same as when Abraham first visited Shechem. It has had several names: Canaan, because the first inhabitants were descendants of Canaan; Land of Promise, because God promised to give it to the seed of Abraham; Land of Israel, after its division among the tribes; Judea, first applied to the territory of the Southern Kingdom, and after the Babylonian captivity loosely applied to the whole land; Palestine, derived from the Philistines who formerly inhabited the southeastern borders and mainly used since the time of Christ. At the time of Christ it was made up of five political districts, three west and two east of the Jordan. (1) Judea, on the south. Here was the purest Jewish stock, the most of culture and aristocracy. It contained Bethlehem, the birth-place of David and of Jesus; Caesarea, the Roman capital built by Herod the Great, and Jerusalem, the national and religious capital of the Hebrew people. (2) Samaria in the center. It was populated by a mongrel race that both hated the Jews and was hated by them. Sychar, the ancient Shechem, where was located the Samaritan temple was the most important place. (3) Galilee, on the north. The population was mainly Jewish, though there were many Gentiles. They were provincial and uncultured. Capernaum was the main city, though there were many others around the Sea of Galilee. (4) Perea, on the south and on the east of the Dead Sea and river Jordan. It was mainly a country population and composed mostly of Jews. (5) Bashan, in the northern district east of the Jordan. The population was largely Gentile, and hence heathen in religion, and was sometimes called Decapolis, or the district of ten cities. While Jesus extended his ministry to all these districts the interest centers mainly in Judea and Galilee. As a whole, Palestine is a little less than two hundred miles in length with a

width of from fifty to one hundred miles. In this little country of about twelve or thirteen thousand square miles occurred most of the events of both the Old and the New Testament.

272. **Rulers of Palestine.** To understand many of the incidents of the life of Jesus and his immediate followers it is necessary for us to know something of the government and rulers of the time. (1) Roman emperors. The great world power during the period of the inauguration of the Christian movement was Rome. The emperors during the time of Christ were Octavius (or Augustus) Caesar, who ruled from B.C. 31 to A.D. 14, and Tiberius who reigned A.D. 14-37. Other rulers of importance during New Testament times were Claudius (A.D. 41-54), Nero (A.D. 54-68) and Vespasian (A.D. 69-79). That the Romans looked with scorn upon Palestine as a small and despised province is indicated by the references made to it by Tacitus when he records the attempt of Nero to charge the Christians with the burning of Rome. (2) Local rulers. Palestine was not under the immediate rule of Rome at the time of the birth of Jesus. The politics and rulers and their work may be summed up as follows. (a) The kingdom of Herod the Great. Herod the Great ruled as an hereditary king over all the five districts of Palestine for thirty-three years, ending B.C. 4. He owed his position to the shrewd diplomacy of his father, Antipater, who won the favor of Julius Caesar, and to his own skill in securing Roman favor. He was a suspicious tyrant who murdered right and left, lest some one should rise up to dispute his right to the throne. His acts with reference to Jesus and the destruction of the children were, therefore, among the last of his sinful and bloody career. (b) The Tetrarchy, or government of four (B.C. 4—A.D. 41). Herod's kingdom was divided among three of his sons. Archelaus (Matt. 2: 22) received Judea and Samaria. In A.D. 6 he fell under the disfavor of the emperor and was banished, and his kingdom was placed under a series of imperial governors of whom Pontius Pilate, who delivered Jesus to be crucified, was the sixth. Antipas, known as Herod the Tetrarch, (Matt. 14: 3) inherited Galilee and Perea. He

was a better ruler than Archelaus and ruled from B.C. 4 to A.D. 39. Jesus spent most of his life in the country of Herod Antipas. He divorced his Arabian wife and married his brother Philip's wife. Because John the Baptist rebuked this sin Antipas finally had him put to death. Philip, another son (Luke 3: 1), became Tetrarch of the district of Bashan. He ruled from B.C. 4 to A.D. 34 and was the best ruler of them all. Jesus was in his territory when at Bethsaida and when he was at Caesarea Philippi, his capital, where Peter made the great confession. A fourth Tetrarchy was ruled over by Lysanias (Luke 3: 1) who was not of the Herodian family. Abilene, his territory, was not a part of the former dominion of Herod. (3) The Kingdom of Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who ruled A.D. 41-44. All Palestine, together with Abilene, which was outside of the dominions of Herod the Great, were united under him so that he ruled over a territory greater than any Jewish king since Solomon. (4) King Agrippa II A.D. 44-66. At the death of Agrippa a new division of the territory was made and his son, Herod Agrippa II, was given the old territories of Philip and Lysanias. Only by courtesy was he called a king, the other provinces being put under governors. He was the last of the Herods to rule, and by the courtesy of Festus, heard Paul at Caesarea (Acts 26). (5) The governors. Besides Pontius Pilate, who came into prominence in connection with the death of Jesus, the New Testament mentions two other provincial governors—Felix, A.D. 53-60 (Acts 23: 24) and Festus, A.D. 60-62 (Acts 25, 26).

273. **The Priesthood and Sanhedrin.** (1) The priests in most cases had come to consider religion a mere form. From the time of the return from captivity when they ruled as priest-princes they had constituted the Jewish aristocracy and possessed most of the wealth of the people. While having little genuine interest in religion, they were proud of their Jewish heritage and maintained their traditional customs. This secular priestly part was called Sadducees, and had only a reactionary and negative theology. They cared for the more secular things and especially gave themselves to

political trickery. (2) The Sanhedrin. While the administration of justice was theoretically in the hands of the Roman procurator, it was practically all put into the hands of the Jewish courts, either local councils or the great Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. This last named body was the great national judicial council among the Jews and consisted of seventy-one men. Its president was usually the high priest and its members were, for the most part, prominent representatives of the priestly aristocracy. In the time of Jewish independence it had supreme authority over many matters such as decisions over life and death. At this time it had jurisdiction only in Judea. It tried all kinds of offenses and its judgments were final in all except in cases involving life. In such cases it had to yield to the procurator who alone could sentence one to death. This restriction accounts for their having to send Jesus to Pilate to secure his death. It also accounts for their not putting Paul to death. It became a sort of Jewish senate that considered everything that affected the interests of Jews.

274. **Demonology.** The question of demoniacal possession of men is always a subject of mystery. But it seems clear that we are to regard it as a reality and to be instructed by the fact. Their expulsion is a wonderful manifestation of the gracious character of the gospel, and of Jesus, and is a powerful proof of his divine mission. It is a striking proof of the victory of the Saviour over Satan, and assures us that the victory already seen will finally be complete. Then, too, we must accept their possession as a fact, if we are to accept the plain meaning of the Scripture which was written for the people. Four facts seem to settle the whole matter. (1) The gospel writers constantly speak of their possession of men as real. (2) Jesus is recorded as speaking of them in the same way, and even of speaking to the evil spirits (Mark. 1: 25). (3) Jesus argues on the assumption of their reality (Luke 10: 17-20). He connected the work of the disciples in casting out demons with the overthrow of Satan. (4) The demons spoke with superhuman knowledge. This

clearly shows that one possessed the man which was wiser than he was.

Besides the positive and conclusive proof furnished by these four facts the arguments commonly put forth against their reality seem wholly inadequate. These arguments and the answers to them are as follows: (1) That the symptoms are often the same as those of certain bodily ailments such as epilepsy and insanity. But why should we conclude that the demon possession might not produce insanity or nervous disease, or why may not persons who have such afflictions be more liable to such possessions? This, therefore, gives no reason for deserting the plain teaching of the Scripture. In such a case as the Gadarene demoniac, swine might have symptoms of insanity, but only demon possession can explain the sudden transfer of these manifestations from a man to the swine. (2) That Jesus and the gospel authors, in speaking of them as real, are simply employing popular language without endorsing it. But would that not be deception. To address a spirit, as if it were present and doing certain terrible work, when no such spirit was there, would have been the grossest misrepresentation—not just humoring a wrong opinion. Insane people came to be called lunatics because of the supposed evil influence of the moon upon them. To call them lunatics does not endorse that superstition, but to command the moon to cease such influence would endorse it. The same attitude would make Jesus endorse a falsehood, if demon possessions are not real. (3) That demon possessions only occur about the time of Christ's earthly ministry. But how do we know they only occurred then? The fact of Christ's casting them out does not prove it. They are discussed then because of his overcoming them. Moreover, it is reasonable that at this time they should do their worst in the struggle which is always going on between them and the Saviour, and that we might see the absolute supremacy of Jesus over them. (4) That it is a hard teaching to understand. But this does not destroy the fact. We can't fully understand the union of the human and divine in the one person, Jesus; nor the action of the Holy Spirit on the spirit of man; nor the

marvel of regeneration and wonderful change from the children of darkness to the children of light. But all these are nevertheless facts. So is demon possession.

275. **Bethlehem, the Place of Christ's Birth.** Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, is a little city five miles south of Jerusalem. It is on a rather high ridge in a very rocky district, and is a city of one street of a half mile long, whose houses are of white stone. The name means "house of bread." It was the birth-place and home of David and was called the City of David (1 Sam. 16: 1-4). Jesus was born there because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David (Luke 2: 1-5). Caesar Augustus had made a decree that all should be taxed and that, according to the Jewish custom, each person should be enrolled at the family city. Joseph and Mary arrived there and straightway Jesus was born. Few cities have more sacred associations than Bethlehem. It was there that Jacob suffered his great grief in the loss of his beloved Rachel. There Ruth came to reap and to win the heart of Boaz, and there they together afterwards made so many reapers happy. There are the plains where David kept his father's sheep and learned to sing the songs that have blessed the whole world. There shepherds kept their flocks by night, and heard the angel announcement of the birth of Jesus and their song of peace and good will to men. To the end of time Bethlehem will create in every Christian bosom a deep feeling of reverence.

276. **Chronology of the Life of Christ.** The time of the birth and death of Jesus and the length of his public ministry are very difficult subjects. The writers of the Gospels did not put much emphasis on the matter of dates. But we know that he was born before the death of Herod the Great (Matt. 2: 1-12). We also know from Josephus that Herod died B.C. 4. This seems to put the birth of Jesus in B.C. 5 or in the early part of B.C. 4. We know nothing of the time of year. Through very careful work chronological specialists have shown that he was crucified at the Passover, A.D. 29 or 30. As to the length of his active ministry there are also several perplexing problems. In the early centuries it was customary to count "The acceptable year

of our Lord" (Isa. 61: 1-2) which Jesus said was fulfilled in himself as teaching that the ministry covered only a little over a year. This conclusion was apparently further endorsed by the fact that the first three Gospels only mention one Passover and one journey to Jerusalem, and that at the end of his life. But this seems impossible because the Gospel of John mentions three Passovers (2: 13; 6: 4; 12: 1), the last of which plainly is identical with that mentioned by the other Gospels. The structure of this Gospel makes it necessary to allow for three Passovers, and some months before the first. From this we know that it was at least two and a half years. If the feast mentioned in John 5: 1 was another Passover it would have been three and a half years. This last number seems more probable, because it appears from another line of reasoning that he began his public ministry A.D. 26 or 27 and his work, therefore, fell within the years A.D. 26 to 30.

277. **Sources of Information.** There are several sources from which we may learn something of Jesus. He is mentioned by such writers as Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny and Suetonius. Even the Talmud, the great Jewish law book, refers to him. The epistles of Paul, and other New Testament epistles, give us some knowledge. The information of these epistles is very important when it is remembered that much of this was written before the Gospels. Our chief sources, however, are the four Gospels, and they will be followed almost entirely.

These four Gospels do not each, or all together, furnish us with a complete life of Christ. Neither writer attempted to write such a life. This is clear when we remember how much was left out. They barely touched the first thirty years of his life, gave little of the ordinary, but dealt especially with the supernatural in his life. They are clearly telling only the story of his redemptive work wrought out in his life and death and resurrection. Nor were the several Gospels written to supplement each other. If so, one would not have repeated what others had in them. They do, however, supplement in that each has in it something that others do not have. Each Gospel has its own purpose, and was

written to accomplish that purpose, and differs from the others accordingly.

They do, however, present us with a single and harmonious picture, and in some sense, we feel that it is the same picture, of Jesus as the Christ. The first three are quite alike in plan, and are called Synoptic Gospels, which means "seeing together." They have to do with the more external matters connected with Jesus, and deal largely with his Galilean ministry. On the other hand, John deals almost exclusively with the Judean ministry, and puts special emphasis on the more deeply spiritual things. The first three are alive with action, while the last is a contemplation of a great theme. But to think of them a little more in detail and in the order in which they seem to have been written, the following discussion should be helpful:

(1) **Mark.** The author was not an apostle of Jesus. He was the son of Mary of Jerusalem (Acts 12: 12) and was probably converted under the leadership of Peter (1 Peter 5: 13). He was a companion of Paul (Acts 13: 5; 12: 25; 2 Tim. 4: 11) and was with Peter when he wrote his first Epistle (1 Peter 5: 13). He attended Paul and Barnabas part of the way on their first missionary journey, but Paul refused to take him on the second journey. Later he was very useful to Paul (Col. 4: 10; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. 4: 11). Early Christian writers say he was the interpreter of Peter, and that his gospel is based on information gained from him.

His gospel puts great emphasis upon the energy and activity of Jesus. His descriptions are very forceful, and are characterized by their vividness and by the way he introduced many details. He rushes along like a racer, introducing one wonderful scene after another, and furnishes us a breathless narrative. He magnifies Christ's power over devils, who are shown acknowledging him as "Son of God" and pleading with him as to what he shall do with them (5: 7-12). He describes Jesus as a wonder worker who creates awe, terror, and wonder in the hearts of those who see and hear him. He evidently wrote to non-Jewish readers, and seems to have made special appeal to the Romans who, when they saw this wonderful picture would exclaim with the awe-struck centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God."

He made little effort to connect the story of Jesus with Old Testament prophecy, but undertook to prove that he had power to control in all realms, even in the world of spirits. This would win the Romans.

(2) **Matthew.** The author always speaks of himself as "the Publican." He was the son of Alpheus (Mark 2: 14; Luke 5: 27) and was called Levi until Jesus changed his name to Matthew, which means "Gift of God." This name seems fitting when we remember that he was raised from the low and despised position of publican, or tax-gatherer, to the exalted position of an apostle of Jesus. When he gave up his position to become associated with Jesus, he made a farewell feast to his friends, and invited Jesus and his disciples. After this, we know little of him, except that he was present on the day of Pentecost. His business career had fitted him to write this wonderful Gospel.

The material he uses to make up his book is put down in a very systematic way, with no attempt to follow chronological order. He groups seven parables together, and in another place studies ten miracles together, though they were performed at different times and places. He puts stress on the teachings of Jesus, rather than on his miracles. This is noticed when we consider the long sections of teachings and addresses, such as the Sermon on the Mount. He lays great stress on the kingdom of Christ. This is seen in the parables of the Kingdom, the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the keys of the Kingdom, referred to by Jesus, and in the official and organic matters referred to in the discussions. As King, Jesus rejected the Jews, and organized his own movement. An outstanding characteristic feature of the book is the way he links it up with Old Testament prophecy. He quotes sixty-five such prophesies, and shows how they are fulfilled in Christ, and what is transpiring in his life and work. He clearly wrote this Gospel to the Jews. He shows the absurdity of their rejection of Christ by portraying to them their absurd criticisms of him. He also used terms that were dear to them, such as the "Holy City," "Son of David," and "City of the Great King." He tried to win his own people.

(3) **Luke.** The author of this book was not an apostle—not even a disciple while Jesus was still on the

earth. He was a beloved physician (Col. 4: 14) and first appears as a companion of Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 16: 10), where we first meet the "we" sections, which indicate his presence with Paul on different occasions. Paul calls him his "fellow laborer." From his preface (1: 1) we learn that he was not an eye witness to what he wrote. He is thought to be "the brother" whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches (2 Cor. 8: 18). Tradition makes him a Gentile proselyte, and as is indicated by the gospel, is the most cultured of the Gospel writers.

His Gospel was written sometime before A.D. 70, since the Temple was still standing. It was intended for the Gentiles and especially for the Greeks, and was written in a way that would appeal to them. They adored man with his thought and beauty and speech, and in that made their nearest approach to God. They worshiped as their gods some form of perfect humanity. The gospel for the Greeks must, therefore, present a perfect divine man as Saviour of all men. Luke showed how Jesus was that world Saviour, because he touched man at every point of need. As Jesus is seen here, he is near enough to them to meet the longings of the Greek soul.

In this effort to win the Greeks, Luke gives a large place to prayer and song and praise. Example of these are found in every section of the book (1: 46-55; 2: 20; 3: 21; 9: 28; and many others). He gives so large a place to woman that it has been called a gospel of womanhood (1: 3; 1: 42-55, and so forth). Along with this fine concern for woman is his special attention to the poor and outcast. He gives much consideration to the way in which Jesus blessed the poor, the neglected, and the vicious classes. This is seen in the case of publicans, sinners, beggars, harlots, poor, maimed, halt, and blind. Here also is a worldwide purpose and universal view not found in the other evangelists (2: 10, 32). By all of these means, and because of the delicacy, accuracy, picturesqueness, and precision of the beautiful Greek he used, Luke has presented us with a book the beauty of which cannot be surpassed, one that would appeal to Greeks.

(4) **John.** The writer of this book was one of the first five disciples of Jesus. A study of the book shows

that he was a Jew, who was an eye-witness to most of what he writes. It also indicates that he was the apostle, John. We know that John was the son of Zebedee and one of the three most honored and prominent of the apostles. (Mark 1: 19, 20; Matt. 17: 1-3.) He also wrote three epistles and Revelation, and outlived all of the other apostles. He died as an exile on the Isle of Patmos about the year 100 A.D.

His gospel is probably the last of the New Testament writings except Revelation. He seems to have written to all nationalities, and portrays the eternal incarnate Word. His writing is characterized by simplicity, being composed of the simplest Greek; by parallelisms, seen in the way he says the same thing in similar, but different, words; by repetition, in which words or phrases are repeated for emphasis; by contrasts, as when he places over against each other such terms as light and darkness, belief and unbelief, good and evil, or God and Satan. This he does as a method of teaching. The book as a whole has been characterized as a book of feasts, nearly all of the contents being in some way related to one of the six Jewish feasts mentioned. It is a book of testimony. His purpose is to secure a verdict—to get man to believe in Jesus. He declares that he has other testimony, not given, but gives seven lines of testimony: that of certain individuals, that of John the Baptist, that of the works of Jesus, that of Jesus himself, that of the Scriptures, that of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. Since he is trying to produce belief in Jesus, he presents cases of belief and unbelief with the cause leading to it, and the result of it. The word belief occurs about one hundred times. It is a gospel of symbolism, setting forth the profoundest truth by such symbols as light, darkness, Good Shepherd, sheepfold, vine, the way and the Bread from heaven, and the water of life.

278. **The Supernatural.** In studying the story of Christ we are at once confronted with the supernatural, and must decide what our attitude toward it will be. Is Jesus a good man whose example we should follow and who would show us how to come to God, or is he God making approach to us and trying to reveal himself to us? And what shall be our thought toward the miracles that he is said to have performed? If we

believe in a personal and living God, we should not be surprised that he does extra or supernatural deeds. We can not think of God as inactive; and his acts would, as a matter of course, be beyond the power of man. If, therefore, we are to be convinced that Jesus is very God, he must perform deeds such as God would perform. There may be critical study, but there must be no presumption against the supernatural. We start with the fact that God is and works and loves and that he sent his Son to save us. All the rest is easy. For no other miracle is comparable to the miracle of sending his Son to men. All other signs (or miracles) and all the powers and wonderful works of Jesus are incidents when compared with the great fact of the coming of the Son of God to us in human form. Indeed we can not believe in God and believe that he would not perform the miraculous.

SECTION II. PREPARATIONS AND BEGINNINGS

279. **Pre-existence and Ancestry of Jesus.** Jesus did not begin to exist at the time of his birth, but had been with the Father from the beginning and had been his agent in the creation of the world. This doctrine is abundantly taught in such Scriptures as John 1: 1-14; 17: 5; Phil. 2: 5-8; Col. 1: 16, 17; Heb. 1: 2. One of the great mysteries of the Christian faith is the fact of the incarnation of this pre-existing one in human flesh. The fact of this incarnation raises the question of his ancestry. Everyone is born into some family. The genealogies of Matthew (1: 1-16) and of Luke (3: 23-38) describe the family of Jesus and show him to be of an old and honorable family that had furnished many great men and kings. Matthew traces his human descent to David and Abraham, the founders of the Hebrew nation (Matt., 1: 2) and represents him as the Jewish Messiah. Luke traces him back to Adam (3: 38), the common ancestor of all men, and thereby pictures him as Saviour of both Jews and Gentiles. Mark (1: 1) calls him the Son of God, while John (1: 1-14) declares that he is God "who was made flesh and dwelt

among us." It is clearly stated that Joseph came from the house of David (Matt. 1: 20; Luke 2: 4), and while it is not expressly stated several scriptures (Luke 1: 32; Acts 2: 30; 13: 23) seem to imply that Mary belongs to the same line.

280. **The Announcements.** (1) To Zacharias (Luke 1: 5-25). While Zacharias, a faithful and devout priest, was performing his duty in the temple, an angel appeared to him and announced that he should have a son that should be a source of great joy and blessing. His name was to be called John and he was to be great in the sight of God. He came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and would be the herald of the Messiah (2) To Mary (Luke 1: 26-38). About six months after the visit to Zacharias the same angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary, a virgin living in Nazareth, and told her that she should bear a son who should be called Jesus. The great work which he should do as the Messiah is set forth in Luke 1: 32, 33. While she was to be his mother, his existence would be due to the direct agency of God (Luke 1: 35). Overwhelmed by the joy of the blessing that was to come to her, she went to the hill country of Judea to visit Elisabeth, her cousin, who was soon to become the mother of John the Baptist. On this visit she sang her wonderful song (The Magnificat) concerning the high honor that was to be hers (Luke 1: 39-56). (3) To Joseph (Matt. 1: 18-25) to whom Mary was espoused. The espousal was usually associated with festivities and was not over a year before the marriage. It soon became evident that Mary was with child, and Joseph thought she had broken her vows of betrothal, and planned to privately put her away. But in a dream the angel of the Lord told him of the miraculous birth of Jesus, and showed him that he should take her and protect her and the child.

281. **Childhood and Youth of Jesus.** This is the longest of the periods of the life of Christ, covering, as it does, the first thirty years of his life. It is, however, the period of least information. A few matters are important:

1. **Lowly Birth and Vision of the Shepherds** (Luke 2: 1-20). It was a long, hard journey for Mary to go to

Bethlehem, but, even if it was not necessary for her to go, she would not want to be separated from Joseph at this time. The crowded condition of Bethlehem during the period of enrollment made it impossible for them to find room in a hotel. But God was overruling all and the lowly pair found such shelter as they could in the stable. Here in this lowly place was born the one that should afterward be called the lowly Nazarene. With a strange pathos verses 6 and 7 tell us the story of his birth.

But there was a divine interest in this Child. Angels soon appeared to shepherds who were keeping the flocks of the temple and announced his birth. Men might be indifferent, but there were heavenly worshipers. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and no wonder that its joy could not be restrained when the world's Saviour was born. Their praise contained a word of praise to God, and a word of promise and hope to men. And the lowly shepherds were responsive in faith, and went immediately and found him and were the first of earth to do homage to the world's Redeemer. They heard, came, found, made known their vision and returned to their work rejoicing and praising God, and were the forerunners and representatives of the common people who "heard him gladly," and who still constitute the bulk of his disciples.

2. **His Infancy.** Several incidents connected with his infancy are important. (1) Circumcision and presentation in the Temple (Luke 2: 21-38). This is the beginning of his submission to the law. The circumcision was a home rite. It took place on the eighth day, at which time the child was usually named. It was a sign of the "everlasting covenant" (Gen. 17: 1-2) and a condition of Jewish nationality. The first born was holy unto the Lord (Ex. 13: 11-15). At the end of forty days Mary (according to law) appeared at Jerusalem, five miles away from Bethlehem, to present him to the Lord and to pay his redemption price (Num. 18: 15, 16). This was also the time of the purification of his mother (Lev. 12: 1-8) and the offerings made were a proof of the poverty of the family (Luke 2:

24; Lev. 12: 8). While scribe and priest may not have been much impressed by all this, there was a splendid welcome for him there. At least two devout souls, Simeon and Anna, were prepared to receive divine impressions and recognize him as the promised Messiah. The song of Simeon (Luke 2: 25-32) is full of predictions of the greatness and glory that is to come to this child. (2) Visit of the wise men (Matt. 2: 1-12). There is yet more of welcome for the Christ Child. Peasant and prophetic spirits of Israel had done him homage and now gifted men of learning came from afar that he might also have the homage of the heathen world. They were of the learned class of magicians and students of astronomy. We know nothing of the place from whence they came, nor of their nationality, nor of their number. They came and found him and worshiped him, offering their gifts. They represent the vague longing and hope of a heathendom, and foreshadow a time when all heathendom shall join in loving adoration of Jesus. Having bestowed upon him their gifts of royalty, they returned and, by divine direction, evaded Herod. (3) Flight into Egypt and return to Nazareth (Matt. 2: 13-23; Luke 2: 39). This is a wonderful story. God seems to be near to earth. He is revealed to the seeking and obedient, and concealed from others. God watches over his son, while Joseph, in prompt obedience, co-operates. Here is the beginning of hatred and jealousy against Jesus, and here is forecast the attitude of rulers to the close of his life. The inquiry about this King of the Jews, and the way in which the wise men mocked him, led Herod to have all the male children under two years old killed. By direction of God, Joseph took Jesus and his mother to Egypt where they stayed until Herod died, and then, by divine direction, returned and settled in Nazareth of Galilee. In all this we see how when man proposes God disposes.

3. **His Childhood and Youth** (Luke 2: 40-52). (1) His home and life. About thirty years of Jesus' life was spent at Nazareth. It was seventy or eighty miles from Jerusalem, fourteen miles from the Sea of Galilee and twenty-one miles from the Mediterranean Sea. Through

it ran the great highway from Damascus to the Mediterranean, and men of all nationalities were frequently on its streets. Christ lived in the most intense commercial life of his times, but in a city so despised that he was contemptuously called a Nazarene. We know that there were other children in the home (Mark. 6: 3) and, knowing that his parents were devout and discreet people (Matt. 1: 19; Luke 1: 38; 2: 15, 18), we may be sure that he was instructed according to the Law (Deut. 6: 6, 7; 11: 19). We learn from Matt. 13: 55 that Joseph, the reputed father, was a carpenter and from Mark 6: 3 that Jesus followed the same trade. Luke 4: 16 seems to imply that it was his custom to lead the worship of the synagogue in his city. (2) Visit to Jerusalem at twelve years of age. Joseph and Mary went to the feast every year. Whether Jesus ever went before is not certain, but at twelve he became "a son of the law" and was required to go. He was deeply interested in everything and, when the family returned home, tarried to discuss matters of religion with the doctors. When three days later his mother found him and protested he uttered the first words recorded of him—"I must be about my Father's business." They breathe the spirit of service and obedience to the Father that actuated him throughout his whole life. (3) His development. Verses 40 and 52 describe for us these years of development in Jesus. They show us how perfectly his character grew. It is a normal growth in a natural order, and included every side of his nature, and both the human and the divine relations.

282. **Ministry of John the Baptist** (Luke 1: 57-80; Matt. 3: 1-12; Mark 1: 1-8; Luke 3: 1-20; Matt. 11: 2-30; Luke 7: 18-35). It had now been about four hundred years since God had sent his people any prophetic message. (1) Promise of his coming and work. The prophets (Mal. 3: 1; 4: 5; Isa. 40: 3-5) had foretold John's coming; the angel of God had announced it to Zacharias, his father (Luke 1: 5-25), and at his birth (Luke 1: 57-80) Zacharias in a prophetic hymn of praise prophesied through the "Holy Ghost" as to what he should be and do. He was the end of the Old Testament dispensation (Luke 16: 16). (2) His appearance and

character. John was different from Jesus in that his training was alone in the wilderness (Luke 1: 80) while that of Jesus was in the busy crowds of the city. He had, no doubt, spent his years of seclusion in self-discipline, meditation upon the sins of the times, and in the study of the prophetic visions of the Messiah and his Kingdom. In appearance he was like one of the old prophets. He showed himself to be "a man of broad mind, deep insight into character, and of profound convictions." (3) His preaching and baptizing. He did not wear priestly garments, and preached in the wilderness. Nor did he perform any miracle (John 10: 41) and yet in a little while the whole land was ringing with his fame and message. Even Jesus paid high tribute to him (Matt. 11: 11). So great became his power that the people thought he might be the Messiah. In his message he claimed nothing for himself, but that he was the prophesied herald of the Redeemer. He announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, and warned the people to repent and be ready for the coming of their King. He put aside all honors and gave all praise to the coming one, and after his arrival pointed him out as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John. 1: 29-36). He adapted his message to all classes, and after their repentance and confession of sin, gave them baptism, which was a symbol of remission of sins. It was a preparatory work that aroused the nation, quickened its conscience, kindled afresh Messianic hope, and prepared a people for Jesus. It is of interest, also, that Jesus later paid John the highest tribute (Matt. 11: 2-30; Luke 7: 18-35).

283. **Baptism and Temptation.** The baptism and temptation are put together because the Holy Spirit, who descended on him at baptism, took the lead in directing him to the place of temptation, and because the temptations recorded seemed to center in the Father's announcement of his Sonship that occurred at his baptism. (1) The baptism (Matt. 3: 13-17; Mark 1: 9-11; Luke 3: 21, 22). Much could be said about the purpose and meaning of Christ's baptism, but most of it would be valueless. We shall content ourselves

with the statement of Jesus—"Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." We know also that baptism marked a turning point in his life. His new life of action and publicity began from this point. His past carpenter life was closed and his new life as Jesus, the Saviour, opened. The opening heaven, the descending Spirit and the voice from God made it an occasion of profound significance to Jesus, to John and to us. To John it left no doubt that this was the Messiah whom he came to herald (John 1: 33). To Jesus it attested his Sonship and the Father's pleasure in him, and also gave him special equipment, or divine enduement, for his work. To us it not only instructs and assures us concerning Jesus, but suggests to us the co-operation of the Trinity in the plan of redemption. (2) The temptation (Matt. 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12, 13; Luke 4: 1-13). The Spirit carried Jesus from baptism to the wilderness where during forty days he fasted and was tempted. He at once began his battle with Satan whom he came to destroy (Heb. 2: 14), and must needs be tempted that he may sympathize with them that are tempted (Heb. 2: 18; 5: 8). It does not matter whether the tempter came to him in outward and visible form, or, as he so often and so successfully comes to us, by inward and sinful suggestion. The temptation was real and Jesus was the victor in the struggle. As indicated by the narratives, the temptations were of three types. First, through bodily appetite, or to put the physical first. It would be to distrust the Father's care and to prostitute his supernatural and miracle working power to selfish ends. Second, through spiritual pride and his trust in God. What a sensation this would have produced! It would have been just what the Jews were looking for in the Messiah. But he who would not refuse to trust God's care as indicated in the first temptation would not now be led to presume on it by rushing into unnecessary difficulties. Third, through ambition, or his plans for world dominion. It was an appeal to the love of power. Why wait for the slow process of the centuries to attain what he wanted and would finally have. In all three of these temptations Jesus shows us the great value of the Scripture in

overcoming the evil one, and the consequent importance of its study; while the coming of angels to minister to him shows how God will care for those who trust him and refuse to put their personal interest before duty and right.

284. **Beginning of His Ministry.** Here things begin to move rapidly. The topic covers work at Bethabara where John was baptizing, in Galilee, in Jerusalem, out in Judea and in Samaria, and includes nearly all of the first year of his ministry. These events are recorded in John's Gospel alone. During this time he received much testimony from John and others, and was recognized as having authority over the temple, and over nature, and as a great teacher.

1. **Testimony of John the Baptist to Him** (John 1: 19-37). Jesus returned from the scene of temptation strong in the Spirit and ready to begin his work. He returned to the scene of the preaching of John the Baptist, whose witness to him is recorded here. (1) To a deputation of priests and Levites sent to him from the Jews of Jerusalem. This was on the day before Jesus returned from the temptation. John denied that he was the Christ, but said that Christ was among them. (2) To the crowd. On the next day he saw Jesus returning from his wilderness trials, and declared him to be "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." (3) To two of his disciples on the next day he pointed out Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God," and immediately they followed him. After John had thus pointed him out as the one who should remove sin, and as the one prefigured by the lambs of Old Testament sacrifices, his own power and influence began to decrease.

2. **Enlistment of His First Disciples** (John 1: 38-51). When Jesus saw John's two disciples following him, he responded to their desire and revealed himself to them as the Messiah. One of them was no doubt John (1: 40). The other, Andrew, brought his brother Simon to Jesus. The next day Jesus personally called Philip, who in turn, went out and won Nathanael. It will be observed that only one was won directly. Two followed him partly by John's testimony and partly be-

cause of their fellowship with Jesus himself. One each was won by Andrew and Philip. These first disciples followed him, not because they thought he was a great teacher, but because they believed him to be the Messiah.

3. **First Appearance in Social Life and First Miracle** (John 2: 1-11). Jesus left the lower Jordan and, with his new found disciples, went for a visit in Galilee. The scene is the beautiful little village of Cana, the home of Nathanael, and was situated about seven miles north of Nazareth, the home of Jesus. Here he met his mother who, with himself and disciples, was among the guests. This has been called the most famous wedding in history, and the incidents connected with it are of vast significance. It showed how different was to be the ministry of Jesus from that of John and the Old Testament prophets. It shows him in attendance upon one of their festive social occasions, and lets us understand that he was not to be a hermit, but that he would mingle with men, visit their homes and attend their feasts. The miracle was performed as an act of kindness and helpfulness. It shows that Jesus had not come to decrease, but to increase all of their wholesome joys, and, especially, that he was to bless the home and family life. The abundance and excellence of the quality of the wine, as well as the way it was wrought through those servants, shows the glory of his nature. It shows that our supernatural is his natural, and proved to his new disciples that he was really the Messiah.

4. **His First Passover** (John 2: 12—3: 21). After the Cana miracle Jesus made a brief visit to Capernaum, which later became his home and the center of his great Galilean ministry. From there he went up to Jerusalem. This is his first appearance in the national capital. His ministry up to this time seems to have been of a more private character and intended to confirm the faith of his disciples. He now enters upon the more public phase of his work and then gives Judea and Jerusalem and the rulers of the nation their first opportunity to accept him as the Messiah. Two matters of importance are recorded. (1) His first act of au-

thority—cleansing the Temple. The city was thronged with those who had come up to the feast. For the purpose of accommodating those who wished to buy victims for sacrifice and change foreign money into the sacred shekel with which to pay the Temple dues they had crowded into the sacred precincts, and by their noisy disputes and wrangling, together with the din of sheep and cattle, had disturbed the worship. Jesus, with a show of authority which they dared not resist, cleared the place. "It was the beginning of his reformatory work against the religious abuses of his time." It was a sign of the radical purification that was necessary to rightly inaugurate the Messianic Kingdom. It was a good place to begin—at the house of God, the symbol and center of their worship. It indicated that his work would be mainly to right the worship of men. It showed that the Messiah was to give us spiritual, rather than material, advantages and, thereby, was rousing the hostility of the sordid rulers who now rejected him. (2) His first anxious inquirer —Nicodemus. He had performed miracles while there and many had believed on him (John 2:23). Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews (probably a member of the Sandhedrin) and a teacher in Israel (3:1, 10), but did not share their hostile attitude. He came to Jesus by night probably showing, thereby, the cautious conservatism, real sincerity and latent courage which his later course showed (7:50; 19:39). It is a fine picture. The "teacher of Israel" is learning from the "Teacher come from God." Jesus had met a strong man with deep convictions and made to him a wonderful statement of the principles of the new Kingdom. He stated, reiterated and illustrated his teaching until he had answered all the questions of this seeker after light. He declared the fundamental need of all men to be a new birth. This is a change in man's moral nature, so deep and radical as to make anew his whole spiritual nature. It is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, and is accomplished when one looks to Christ and trusts him, even as the poison of the fiery serpents was destroyed when the Israelites looked at the brazen serpent. He showed also how, through the love of

God, it issues in eternal life, and how it is received through belief, while unbelief brings condemnation.

5. **He Teaches and Baptizes in Judea** (John 3: 22—4: 3). Here is a period of several months of the life of Christ, concerning which no incidents are preserved. Why Jesus left Jerusalem, when the heads of the nation did not receive him gladly, and went into the country place we do not know. That he was successful in this ministry is indicated by the jealousy of John's disciples (3: 26) and by the Scripture statement (3: 22—4: 1-2). Only in this case is Jesus reported as baptizing, and this time it was done by his disciples. The jealousy which his success aroused in John's disciples is interesting. Such jealousy has ruined many a man and defeated many a cause. But John the Baptist was cast in a different mould. He rejoiced in the success of Jesus. His spirit illustrates the real joy of all Christian service by associating it with the advancing interest of Christ's cause. The complaint of his disciples led John to bear his last great testimony to the Saviour. The spirit expressed in v. 30 is the "high-water mark in the career of John and is the index to true nobility of soul." The Gospel writer suggests that Christ's testimony is as superior to any man's as heaven is to earth, and that the way men treat this testimony determines their destiny.

6. **Ministry in Samaria** (John 4: 4-42). (1) His departure and journey. Several things seem to have conspired to cause Jesus to leave Judea. The jealousy of John's disciples, the hostility of the Jewish leaders to him, and the imprisonment of John may all have influenced him to go into Galilee (Matt. 4: 12; Mark 1: 14; Luke 4: 14, 15; John 4: 1-3). He showed his superiority to popular Jewish prejudice by choosing the short but unpopular route through Samaria instead of the long and popular route through Perea. (2) His work in Samaria. On his way he stopped at Sychar and, during two days' work, had much success. The story shows us both the real humanity and the deity of Jesus. It shows us how he subordinated the needs of his body to the passion of his soul. The conduct of the woman in leaving her water pot shows how, when

we come to know Christ, we often forget one errand in the performance of a higher one. It shows how Jesus probes the sinner's heart and leads it to the truth and light. It shows how human testimony makes a welcome for Jesus, and how faith in a willing heart leads to knowledge. On this one and only visit to Samaria many were led to believe on him.

SECTION III. THE MINISTRY IN GALILEE

285. **Galilee.** The little country of Galilee contained about 1,600 square miles, equal to a territory forty miles square. It contained many mountains, but there were also broad and fertile valleys. Josephus says there were in it 204 towns of 15,000 each. The whole population was probably about 3,000,000. It was not only rich in agricultural resources, but was a land of commercial activity as well. It was on the great highway from the near and far east to the Mediterranean Sea and Egypt, and men of all nationalities passed through it. Here also was the Sea of Galilee, a beautiful lake about thirteen miles long and eight miles wide. It is 682 feet below sea level and is subject to sudden storms. It abounds in fish, and in Christ's time was the center of a large population. Its waters were covered with a numerous fleet and "city walls, houses, synagogues, wharves, factories, castles, theatres, hippodromes, and Greek villas" made an almost unbroken line of buildings on its shore, like the Thames above London now. Capernaum was the chief city on this lake, and of all Galilee. Whatever was done here would soon be known all over the lake, and throughout the province. This made it a center from which Jesus could preach to the Jews, and also come in contact with the Gentile world.

286. **The Ministry and its Characteristics.** This great Galilean ministry continued about a year and nine months. The aim seems to have been to proclaim his Kingdom as widely as possible, and to make the principles known to the people of Galilee who were more ready to receive the truth than the prejudiced rulers of Judea. Five things about this ministry are noticeable: (1) It

was a time of intense activity. There was incessant healing, teaching and journeying. The Gospel writers indicate that they do not attempt to tell all that he did and said. (2) It was a time of popularity with the masses. Crowds from all parts followed him. All classes hung on his words and saw, or experienced in themselves, his divine power and blessing. They so crowded him in the city that he often resorted to the country. (3) There was increasing opposition on the part of the Jewish leaders. They antagonized him in many ways. (4) It was a time of development and organization. He appointed the twelve and announced the principles of his Kingdom and Church. (5) The last six months were notable for a series of withdrawals from Galilee into the provinces east and north.

287. **His Arrival in Galilee** (John 4: 43-54; Matt. 4: 13-16; Luke 4: 16-31). After work in Samaria Jesus went into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, demanding repentance, and warning them that the Kingdom of God was near (Matt. 4: 12, 17; Mark 1: 14, 15; Luke 4: 14, 15). He was well received by the Galileans (Luke 4: 15; John 4: 45) because they had been to Jerusalem and had seen his miracles there. Two incidents are given. (1) The healing of the nobleman's son. He went to Cana, and there came to him a nobleman of Capernaum, petitioning him to go to Capernaum and heal his son. Jesus sent him away with the assurance that his son would be well. It is noticeable that the cure was immediate, perfect, and at a distance. (2) His rejection at Nazareth and settlement at Capernaum. From Cana he now returned to Nazareth where he had been brought up. It had been a little over a year since he went away to be baptized. Here one would expect that he would be gladly received. He had come back to offer himself to the faith of the men who had known him, as he had done at Jerusalem and elsewhere. He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath and found a great Messianic passage in the book of Isaiah, and declared that he was the fulfilment of it. The people rejoiced in his message until he reproached them for not accepting him. Their wrath was then so great that they tried to kill him. It is a sad contemplation that the people among whom Jesus lived for thirty years should have been the first to seek

to destroy him. He escaped from them and went to Capernaum, which became for him a new base of operation.

288. **First Busy Days in Capernaum and Vicinity.** Here are three topics of interest. (1) Draught of fishes and call of four fishermen (Matt. 4: 18-22; Mark 1: 16-20; Luke 5: 1-11). Soon after Jesus settled at Capernaum, he saw four fishermen, three of whom had already been with him, working with their nets; and after a miraculous draught of fishes by which he impressed them with his deity, he called them to follow him. This second call differed from the former one (John 1: 35-42) in two respects; it attached them more closely to Jesus, and was a definite call to the ministry. It marks the close of the preparatory stage of his work, and lays the foundation for the permanent organization a little later. (2) A great Sabbath in Capernaum (Matt. 4: 14-17; Mark 1: 21-34; Luke 4: 31-41). This is one of the most notable days of all Christ's experience. First, he went into the synagogue and "astonished" them with his teaching, but more so by casting out a demon. It was his first recorded cure of a demoniac, and then, as always afterward, his victories over these powers of darkness awed the people (Luke 4: 36, 37; 10: 17). Second, he went into the home of Peter and there cured the mother-in-law of Peter of her sickness. These two miracles caused the fame of Jesus to spread abroad in the city. Third, he spent a busy evening in healing. After sunset (when the Sabbath ended) multitudes of sick and of those possessed with devils were brought to him and he healed them. The whole city seems to have been athrill with excitement and to have assembled at Peter's home.

289. **His First Tour of Galilee** (Matt. 4: 23-25; 8: 2-4; Mark 1: 35-45; Luke 4: 42-44; 5: 12-16). Here is an impressive story of Jesus keeping the morning watch. Very early next morning, after his busy Sabbath in Capernaum, he went out into a desert place to pray. His disciples followed him and told him of the gathering crowds. He then told them of his plan of campaign and with them entered upon a tour of cities of Galilee. Everywhere he preached in their synagogues the gospel of the Kingdom, and healed all kinds of diseases. The

country was in a fever of excitement, and people flocked to him from every part of Palestine (Matt. 4: 24, 25). Of all the multitudes whom he healed, and out of whom devils were cast, we are given but one example, the leper. In one of the cities he was met by a leper, an object of compassion and of danger, who, when he was healed, published it abroad, and caused great multitudes to flock to Jesus.

290. **Rising Antagonism of His Enemies.** The Jewish leaders were not pleased with the rising popularity of the Saviour, and began to manifest constant and stubborn opposition to him. Several incidents furnish an occasion for this opposition, and provide us with a knowledge of those things that were particularly offensive to them. These incidents, in which are unfolded the principles of the Kingdom, are as follows: (1) The healing of the paralytic (Matt. 9: 1-8; Mark 2: 1-12; Luke 5: 17-26). In this miracle he showed that he had power to forgive sins. (2) The call of Matthew and his farewell feast (Matt. 9: 9-13; Mark 2: 13-17; Luke 5: 27-32). Here we see Jesus seeking out the men who can and will aid him in his work. He is gathering around him the men from whom he will, a little later, select his apostles. (3) The discussion of fasting (Matt. 9: 14-17; Mark 2: 18-22; Luke 5: 33-39). In this discussion Jesus explains the inadequacy of outward religious ceremonies, and teaches that all true and acceptable religious service comes from the heart. (4) The healing of the man at the Pool of Bethesda (John Ch. 5). Jesus went to Jerusalem to the feast, and only this one incident of the trip is mentioned. In the discussion with Jews, which followed the miracle, Jesus showed his true relation to the Father, and discussed the deep things concerning his divine Sonship, his resurrection and coming judgment. (5) The plucking of corn on the Sabbath (Matt. 12: 1-8; Mark 2: 23-28; Luke 6: 1-5) and the healing of the man with a withered hand (Matt. 12: 9-14; Mark 3: 1-6; Luke 6: 6-11). Here he asserts his right to a merciful ministry on the Sabbath day.

At the conclusion of the teaching, following the last named miracle, the hostility of the Jews had grown to such proportions that they began to lay plans to kill him

(Matt. 12: 14; Mark 3: 6). In all they had found four charges against him. (1) That he claimed the prerogatives of deity. This charge they found in connection with the claim to forgive the sins of the paralytic, and in the claim that God was his Father, during the discussion growing out of the healing of the man at the pool. They said, and rightly, that "none can forgive sins but God only" and that, in claiming God as Father, he was "making himself equal with God." In this they thought him a blasphemer. (2) That he violated their social laws. In going to the home of Matthew, the hated publican, and associating with publicans and sinners, he broke over one of their most binding social rules. Nothing in all social life would offend them more than this. (3) That he ignored, or refused to perform, their religious ceremonies. This is seen in his failure to fast, as was their custom. He clearly shows in the discussion that there is no occasion for fasting, and that the new Kingdom which he has come to establish can not be incorporated into Judaism. (4) That he violated the Sabbath. This was charged in each of the last three of the six incidents given in the last paragraph. Here again Jesus argued against their view and refused to follow their custom. With all this objection to him they planned to kill him, lest he lead others away from their traditions.

291. **Organization of His Kingdom.** In spite of the fact of the growing hostility of the ruling classes, the fame of Jesus was growing (Matt. 12: 15-21; Mark 3: 7-12; Luke 6: 17-19) and an enthusiastic company from all sections was following him. If he was to meet the demands made upon him, and if his work was to be carried on when he was gone, there was necessity for a body of men to be trained by Jesus to whom it could be trusted. He must organize. Two things are involved in the setting up of the organization.

1. **The Choice of the Twelve Apostles** (Matt. 10: 2-4; Mark 3: 13-19; Luke 6: 12-19). In selecting these men he inaugurated a system of trained workers. It was the beginning of his organized Church. The number twelve corresponds to the twelve tribes of Israel. There is great variety and difference in the character of those called. They come from very different walks

of life. One was quick and impulsive, another quiet and meditative, another hesitating and doubtful. We can not be sure of the place where this tremendous organization took place, but it was probably about six or eight miles southwest of Capernaum and three or four miles from the shore of Galilee. The importance of the step may be indicated by the fact that Jesus prayed all night before choosing them (Luke 6: 12). He seems to have felt need of spiritual preparation for inaugurating this movement which was to influence the whole world. Those chosen were called apostles, which means messengers, or those sent. But the Greek word has more the meaning of ambassador, or envoy of state. They were to be Kingdom representatives. They were chosen to be with him and to go forth to preach and heal the sick and cast out devils (Mark 3: 14, 15). They were to carry on Christ's work after the resurrection.

2. **The Ordination Sermon** (Matt. Chs. 5-7; Luke 6: 20-49.) The Sermon on the Mount is a sort of inaugural address. Now that the twelve had been selected, it was natural that he should make some broad statement of the principles upon which his Kingdom should rest. It is, therefore, a sort of constitutional law and occupies a fundamental place in this dispensation comparable to that of the Sinaitic law in the old dispensation It not only contains the fundamental truths of his Kingdom, but also their contrasts to the law given to Moses. For purposes of study the sermon may be analyzed as follows: (1) The beatitudes (5:3-9). These seem to furnish a sort of text for the sermon. There is in them a sort of progress from sorrow for sin to a thirst for righteousness and a purity of heart. The first three have to do with humility, and the last four with righteousness. (2) The manifestation of this humility and righteousness (5: 10-16). This is done in suitably bearing wrong treatment by others, and in usefulness to others. This last is suggested by the figures of salt and light. (3) This righteousness compared with that demanded by the Mosaic law (5: 17-48: end). It will fulfill, not destroy it. Then, too, it is a far superior type of righteousness, because it is to be a heart obedience, and not an outward form. (4) This righteousness in relation to religious duties (6: 1-18). Here we are shown the danger of putting

man before God in our several religious activities. (5) How the principles operate in secular life (6: 19-34). It requires us to be care-free and to make the Kingdom first. (6) How they work in social life (7: 1-12). In this section are given the principles that relate especially to our treatment of others in ordinary life. (7) Concluding appeals and warnings (7: 13-27). These verses make a sort of application of the principles of the whole sermon and the effect it produced.

292. **Second Tour of Galilee.** Having finished the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus returned to Capernaum (Luke 7: 1). While there he healed the centurion's servant (Matt. 8: 5-13; Luke 7: 2-10). The man afforded a fine illustration of great faith in a Gentile, and a prophetic glimpse of the Universal Kingdom of Christ. Following this incident Jesus started on a second tour of preaching and healing in Galilee. Several events of this journey are given. (1) Raising the widow's son (Luke 7: 11-17). Nain was on the north slopes of Hermon, about twenty-five miles southwest from Capernaum. The miracle is wrought without request from anyone and as a matter of compassion. It showed his power over life and death and, as was always the case, made a profound impression on the people. (2) John's last message and Christ's Messiahship acknowledged (Matt. 11: 2-30; Luke 7: 18-35). John sent to Jesus out of prison to know whether he was in truth the Messiah. In reply, Jesus referred his messengers to the works which the true Messiah should do (Isa. 29: 18; 35: 4-6; 42: 7; 61: 1). He then fulfilled all these signs before their eyes, and told them to tell John what they had seen and heard. By this he claimed for himself the title of Messiah. Then, after an oration in praise of John, he further claimed to be the Messiah by speaking of himself as the Son of Man in comparison with John, by the condemnation pronounced against cities that rejected him, by his mission of revealing the Father and by his offer to give rest to those who came to him. (3) He was anointed by a sinful woman (Luke 7: 36-50). This is one of the most touching incidents of his whole ministry. A very sinful woman expressed her love for him by anointing him with oil, and kissing his feet, and washing them with her tears. This is not the same incident as that occurring in the house of

Simon, the leper (Matt. 26: 6-13). (4) His companions. These were his disciples who were being instructed, and certain women who contributed to the support of Jesus and his company.

293. **Teaching and Miracles by the Sea of Galilee.** Having returned to Capernaum from his second tour, Jesus now sets forth many things concerning his Kingdom. He does this by means of both teachings and miracles.

1. **The Teachings.** The teachings are of two kinds, direct and parabolic. (1) Warning against the Scribes and Pharisees, or unpardonable sin (Matt. 12: 22-45; Mark 3: 20-30). Here Jesus shows that his Kingdom will have the strength to destroy Satan's kingdom. It also shows the destruction that will come to those who espouse the cause of the evil kingdom. It is unsafe to regard Jesus as the agent of the devil. (2) Kinship in the Kingdom (Matt. 2: 46-50; Mark 3: 31-35; Luke 8: 19-21). Here he teaches that kinship in the Kingdom is not in blood, but in doing the will of the Father. (3) First teachings by parables. Here are eight parables, seven in Matthew and one in Mark (Matt. Ch. 13; Mark 4: 1-34; Luke 8: 4-8). The evident purpose of these parables was to set forth the nature and workings of his Kingdom. They are the Sower, the Wheat and Tares, the Mustard Seed, the Leaven, the Hid Treasure, the Pearl of Great Price, the Drag Net and the Seed Growing Secretly. The first shows how different the reception which men's hearts will give to the Kingdom. The second points to Satan as the author of all evil, and shows how good and evil grow together until the end. The next two set forth Kingdom growth, one outward and the other inward. The fifth and sixth portray the value of the Kingdom and the joy with which it should be secured, no matter how found, nor what the cost. The seventh, like the second, shows the mixed growth of the good and bad, but lays its stress upon the separation, while the second emphasizes Satan's method of imitating the good. The eighth indicates that the Kingdom depends for its growth upon something more than man can furnish. The Kingdom teacher's task is to sow and let God and time produce the harvest.

2. **The Miracles.** Clear lessons concerning himself and his Kingdom seem to be set forth by each of these. They particularly display his power and complete mastery of all things. (1) The stilling of the tempest (Matt. 8: 23-27; Mark 4: 35-41; Luke 8: 22-25). In spite of the fact that he slept as a human being, he showed his mastery over the powers of nature. (2) The Gadarene demoniac restored (Matt. 8: 28-34; Mark 5: 1-20; Luke 8: 26-39). In this miracle Jesus showed his authority in the spirit world, and particularly over evil spirits. (3) Jairus' daughter raised and the invalid woman healed (Matt. 9: 18-26; Mark 5: 21-43; Luke 8: 40-56). In raising Jairus' daughter he proved that he was master of life and death and, more especially, that he could triumph over death. In the cure of the afflicted woman he showed his control over sickness and disease. (4) Two blind men and a dumb demoniac were healed (Matt. 9: 27-34). Here is a display of power over physiological defects, as will as another illustration of his power over demons. In all this Jesus shows the power with which his Kingdom is endowed. In this group of teachings and miracles, therefore, we may see along side both the principles and the power of Christ's Kingdom.

294. **His Third Tour of Galilee.** The Saviour and his disciples now leave Capernaum again for a tour of Galilee. The incidents of the journey are as follows:

1. **His Second Rejection at Nazareth** (Matt. 13: 54-58; Mark 6: 1-6a). He returned again to his own city. By this time his fame filled the whole land, but the Nazarenes were unchanged. They marveled at his wisdom, but again rejected him because they knew him and his family. So great was their unbelief that Jesus could do but little work there.

2. **Sending Out the Twelve** (Matt. 9: 35—11: 1; Mark 6: 6b-13; Luke 9: 1-6). Continuing his tour Jesus sent forth his twelve to go, two and two, and preach and heal, cast out demons and raise the dead. By this work they were meeting a great present need, and were also gaining experience for their larger work after he was gone from them. They were to keep in Jewish territory and carry his message to a larger number than Jesus

could touch personally. In the meantime, he continued his own labors while they were absent.

3. **Death of John the Baptist** (Matt. 14: 1-12; Mark 6: 14-29; Luke 9: 7-9). Some time before this Herod Antipas had caused John the Baptist to be put to death. All the while his conscience had sorely troubled him. The story is told here because, when Herod heard of the great work of Jesus, he thought it was John risen from the dead. It is a splendid illustration of superstitious fear caused by an accusing conscience.

4. **Two Notable Miracles.** The twelve returned from their tour of Galilee and Jesus retired with them for rest and instruction to a sparsely settled territory on the east side of the lake. Two miracles closely related followed. (1) Feeding five thousand (Matt. 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 30-44; Luke 9: 10-17; John 6: 1-15). That this miracle made a profound impression is seen in that it is the only one recorded by all four of the Gospels. It was a climax in his popularity, and the people determined to make him King. He would not now yield to the third temptation any more than at first when it was presented by Satan. He dismissed the multitude, sent the twelve across the sea, and slipped out into the solitude to pray. (2) He walks on the sea (Matt. 14: 22-36; Mark 6: 45-56; John 6: 16-21). The disciples, whom he had constrained to return to Capernaum, had all the night battled with a fierce storm. Far toward day Jesus went to them, walking on the water, and after allaying their fears, entered the boat with them and calmed the storm, so that they were soon able to reach the shore. So great was the impression made upon them that they worshiped him. And he, being more than man, accepted the worship.

5. **Two Great Discourses.** (1) The Bread of Life (John 6: 22-71). Coming again to Capernaum he met the multitude that had seen the miracle of feeding the five thousand. Their thoughts were still taken up with that. There follows a discourse that is the turning point in the life of Jesus. He tried to lift their thoughts above the earthly to the heavenly bread. He presented the exclusively spiritual side of his work, and many of them did not care for it. They were, therefore, offended in him and many, even of his disciples, turned away from him.

It was a message that tested and sifted. (2) Eating with unwashed hands (Matt. 15: 1-20; Mark 7: 1-23). In this discourse Jesus contrasts true and false religion and again sets forth the spiritual nature of the Kingdom which he came to establish. He condemned all mere forms and ceremonies, and all their traditions, and proclaimed a religion of the heart. He contrasted the traditions of men with the word of God and showed how evil it was for them to replace that word. He showed also that religion is in vain, if it does not help us fulfill our duties to men, and if it is not a religion of the heart.

295. **His Two Journeys North.** We now enter upon the last stages of the Galilean ministry. There is a complete change from the more public to the more private and personal instruction. He avoided the crowds and sought to be alone with his apostles. To this end he made long journeys getting away from the crowds and public places. The record is taken up more with teaching than with miracles. He is training the twelve in the fundamentals of his Kingdom and giving a spiritual preparation that will make them invincible after his death.

1. **First Retirement to the North and Return to the Sea of Galilee.** (1) He goes into the territory of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. 15: 21-28; Mark 7: 24-30). Only one incident of this trip is recorded—that of healing the Syrophoenician's daughter. In comparison with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who had rejected him at Jerusalem and elsewhere, the humble and unconquerable faith of this woman is most refreshing. In performing the miracle Jesus shows his love for the Gentile world. He would take care of the Jews, but he will also love and bless the outside world. (2) He returns through Decapolis (Matt. 15: 29-31; Mark 7: 31-37). To reach Decapolis from Tyre and Sidon Jesus no doubt took the long circuitous road by way of Mount Lebanon and down the head of the Jordan, then across to Damascus and thence southeast to the Sea of Galilee. Here are some matters of importance. (a) Feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15: 32-39; Mark 8: 1-9). The lessons are similar to those of the feeding of five thousand, but the miracle must not be confused with it. (b) The Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign (Matt. 16: 1-12; Mark 8:

10-21). He was now back on the west side of the lake in the region of Magdala and Dalmanutha (Matt. and Mark) and his enemies asked for a sign from heaven. This he refused to give because they were not honest seekers and would not believe him at all, if they would refuse the miracles and teachings already given them. (c) He healed a blind man at Bethesda (Mark 8: 22-26). This is another miracle of gradual healing, and is one of the two miracles recorded by Mark alone. As in a number of cases Jesus asked that it be not reported. His work was spiritual, and the miracles incidental, and he did not want them to take first place in the thought of the people.

2. **Second Retirement to the North and Return to Capernaum.** Once more Jesus retires from the crowd—this time going into the parts of Caesarea Philippi. This was at the foot of Mount Hermon, about twenty-five or thirty miles from the Sea of Galilee. The purpose of the journey seems to be the same as in the former one—to help the disciples to a fuller understanding of the Messianic Kingdom. The incidents are very important. (1) The Great Confession (Matt. 16: 13-20; Mark 8: 27-30; Luke 9: 18-21). After a season of prayer Jesus drew out of the apostles a whole-hearted confession of their faith in him as the divine Messiah. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this confession. Jesus endorsed their belief, telling them that they had received it by the blessing of God, the Father. He also indicated that it is the rock upon which the church should be built and that it should prevail against the very gates of hell. No power of the under world could defeat a church composed of those who, like the disciples, believed in Christ's Messiahship and deity. (2) Christ foretells his death and resurrection. He does this twice on this journey—just after this great confession (Matt. 16: 21-28; Mark 8: 31—9: 1; Luke 9: 22-27) and just after the cure of the demoniac boy (Matt. 17: 22, 23; Mark 9: 30-32; Luke 9: 43-45). Having committed them to his Messiahship, Jesus begins to show what it involves—rejection, death and resurrection. They must know that only through death can he accomplish his work and also that death could not hold him and prevent the finishing of that

work. That they were wholly unprepared for this announcement is indicated in their conduct after each announcement. (3) The transfiguration (Matt. 17: 1-13; Mark 9: 2-13; Luke 9: 28-36). Seeing the confusion which the prophecy of his death had caused in the mind of the disciples, Jesus took three of them as earthly witnesses with him into a mountain. While he was absorbed in fervent prayer, the glory that was veiled in his bodily tabernacle broke forth and clothed his face and raiment with a heavenly radiance. To him appeared Moses and Elijah, representatives of the law and prophets which he fulfilled, and talked with him about his death. The voice of the Father above spoke his approval of Jesus, and instructed them to hear him. To Jesus it was an encouraging approval. To the disciples it was an assurance that their confession had not been a mistake, and that henceforth they were to hear and preach Jesus, not Moses. (4) The demoniac boy healed (Matt. 17: 14-20; Mark 9: 14-29; Luke 9: 37-43a). When Jesus and these three disciples descended from the Mount of Transfiguration they found the other disciples greatly embarrassed because they could not cure a demoniac boy that had been brought to them. Jesus healed him, and in the conversation which he had with the boy's father and with his disciples, showed the importance of faith in our work, and that the more important the task the more important it is for us to pray for power. (5) Jesus returns to Capernaum (Matt. 17: 24; Mark 9: 33). On his return the disciples, no doubt, had many talks with Jesus, but now they were back at Capernaum. (a) He pays the temple tax (Matt. 17: 24-27). As they arrived those who collected the temple tax made inquiry concerning Jesus. To secure the necessary money he caused Peter to catch a fish that had in its mouth just the amount needed. He indicated that he was paying his tax, not because he was under obligation to do so, but to avoid giving needless offense. He teaches that all reformers should avoid actions that will be easily misunderstood, and that are calculated to cause criticism. (b) He discusses true greatness and forgiveness of enemies (Matt. Ch. 18; Mark 9: 33-50; Luke 9: 46-50). These discussions grew out of the apostles' desire to know who should be greatest in the Kingdom. He rebuked the selfish disciples and

showed that greatness does not lie in the reception of honors or in the assumption of leadership, but in humility and service to others. Continuing his instruction he explained the method of dealing with offenses, taught that there is practically no limit as to the amount or number of times we shall forgive, and showed that an unforgiving heart prevents our being forgiven.

296. **At the Feast of Tabernacles** (John Chs. 7 and 8). The Feast of Tabernacles was observed at the time of harvest and corresponds to our Thanksgiving day. It was a time of gratitude and joy. In their observances they memorialized all the outstanding matters connected with their experiences in the wilderness wandering, such as water from the rock, manna from heaven, and the cloud of fire. It was six months before the Passover when he was to die for the world. (1) He refused to go at the suggestion of his unbelieving brethren (John 7: 2-9). They urged that, if he claimed to be the Messiah, he should go up to the feast and manifest himself. He ought not to perform his miracles in the obscure parts of Galilee, but should convince all the world. But he had his own plans and would not change them because of taunting from them. (2) He went up to the feast (John 7: 10-53). It was about the middle of the feast when he secretly came to Jerusalem and went immediately to the Temple and began to teach. His teaching was bold and authoritative and there was a division among the people concerning him. There was, however, no doubt as to the claims he made for himself. The incident shows how the same teaching may result in belief or unbelief, according to the previous opinions of the hearers. (3) The woman taken in adultery was forgiven and her accusers condemned (John 8: 1-11). This incident is not recorded in the old manuscripts and is omitted from the revised version. (4) Jesus teaches that he is the light of the world (John 8: 12-30). Standing where he could see the two great candelabra, towering 72 feet high, which burned each night of the feast to commemorate the pillar of fire in the wilderness, he declared that he was the world's light. He argued the case, showing that they did not see the spiritual light that he brings from heaven because they were of the earth. (5) He discusses spiritual freedom (John 8: 31-59). He shows how

such freedom can only come through Christ. It did not come through being a son of Abraham, but through being absolved from sin and its bondage. In all this discussion he declared both his Sonship and his pre-existence. He displayed a matchless courage in uttering such words to these well known and bitter enemies. For once the truth was put before the Jews and ruling classes in their own stronghold. But their hearts had been hardened and their eyes blinded by sin, and the truth and light were all the more an offense to them.

SECTION IV. PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL (PEREAN MINISTRY)

297. **Working in a New Field—Perea Beyond Jordan.** After the Feast of Tabernacles Jesus returned to Galilee, but we have no record of any more labors there. He soon departed from Galilee (Matt. 19: 1, 2; Mark 10: 1; Luke 9: 51). Luke indicates (9: 51) that his goal was Jerusalem. This period is known as the Perean Ministry and lasted about six months, from the Feast of Tabernacles in October to the Feast of Passover in April. As in the previous six months it was a time of withdrawals. He made visits to Jerusalem and Bethany, but spent most of the time in this territory east of the Jordan. The time was spent in further proclaiming the coming of his Kingdom, in renewed efforts to win Jerusalem, and added training of his disciples. He repeated his teaching concerning his coming death, and endeavored to show them that the final visit to Jerusalem would not be to set up a literal kingdom in which they would secure worldly honors. The period is also made notable for the larger use he made of his disciples in proclaiming his Kingdom.

298. **Busy Days on the Way.** Great crowds followed him (Matt. 19: 1, 2) and he was busy with healing and teaching. (1) Two incidents in Samaria (Luke 9: 51-62). One of the cities of Samaria, through which he was passing, refused to receive him, and thereby furnished him an opportunity to teach James and John that his Kingdom is not to be extended by force, and that vengeance must not be a characteristic of his followers. As

he went on two men desired to follow him, and were taught that, to do so, they must be willing to endure hardship and to make everything secondary to the Kingdom interests. (2) Sending out the seventy (Luke 10: 1-24). The end of Christ's earthly ministry was fast approaching and there was need that the Kingdom should be widely proclaimed during these months. As when he sent forth the twelve in Galilee, he gave them careful instruction concerning their conduct and work. Their return was with the spirit of joy and victory. This success Jesus takes as prophetic of the overthrow of Satan through the work of his disciples. (3) Story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37). Jesus makes an insincere lawyer answer his own question about how to obtain eternal life, and to answer his further quibbling about the neighbor, told the story of the Good Samaritan, in which he showed how the spirit of helpfulness would be manifest in all who truly possess eternal life. (4) A visit to the house of Mary and Martha (Luke 10: 38-42). Here we get our first glimpse of these Bethany sisters—Mary, sitting at the feet of the Master, and Martha "cumbered with much serving." How he came to be in Bethany we do not know. He may have been on his way to the Feast of Dedication, described in the next section. The incidents of the visit are rich in instruction concerning the chief care of life.

299. **At the Feast of Dedication** (John Chs. 9-10). This feast was a joyous occasion, commemorating the purification after it had been defiled by heathen sacrifices. It was instituted 164 B.C. and was celebrated about two months after the Feast of Tabernacles. The incidents fall into three divisions. (1) The healing of the blind man (John Ch. 9). It is very difficult to tell whether this incident, and the one following, occurred at the Feast of Tabernacles, or at this time (see John 7: 14; 9: 1; 10: 22). But on the whole, it seems better to put it here. It is not only of great significance as a miracle, but in the spiritual lessons drawn from it. It clearly shows his power to heal the body, and also teaches that he can save the soul from sin. The chapter is made up of a series of conversations—that involved Jesus, his disciples, the blind man's neighbors and parents, and the Pharisees. It is

very similar to John, chapter 5, and like that chapter, shows much of the divine mission of Jesus. (2) The Good Shepherd (John 10: 1-21). This discourse was brought out as a part of his answer to the criticism of the Pharisees, and is very suggestive of Jesus' own conception of his mission as the Messiah. It shows that his love and care for men are such that he will give his life for them (John 10: 15). (3) Discussion with the Jews on Solomon's porch (John 10: 22-42). Asked by them to state plainly whether he was the Christ he refused to answer directly, but, in the discussion, declared that he had already told them, that his works were ample evidence, that he had the power to give men eternal life, that he and the Father are one. This so inflamed them that they sought to take him, but he escaped and went back to Perea, beyond the Jordan.

300. **At Work Again in Perea.** It is a period of much activity. He touches such places as Bethabara, where John the Baptist had worked, Bethany near Jerusalem, Ephraim in Judea and Jericho. Only two miracles are mentioned, while several discourses and many parables are recorded. Although it will be taking the events somewhat out of the order in which they occur, it will be profitable for us to group them under the three divisions indicated.

1. **The Miracles.** (1) The healing of a deformed woman (Luke 13: 10-17). Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and saw a woman who was terribly afflicted, and healed her. The indignation of the ruler of the synagogue furnished him an opportunity to show that the Sabbath should be used to do good deeds. (2) Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11: 1-46). This miracle probably belongs near the end of this visit to Perea, just before Jesus withdrew to Ephraim. Mary and Martha who lived at Bethany about two miles from Jerusalem, seemed to keep up with the movements of Jesus, and knew where he was when their deep sorrow came. Their appeal brought Jesus to their rescue. He here performed the most startling miracle of all his ministry. It went beyond all expectation, and was a wonderful revelation of his divine power. It was not only to bring back new life, as he had done before, but to call

forth out of the grave a decomposing body and make it whole also. From the whole story we may learn that to the one who trusts Christ and, therefore, has life in him, death is impossible, except as an incident in endless life in Christ. It is no marvel that it led many even among the Jews to believe on him. On the other hand, the Jews would see that such miracles would win all men and would increase their efforts to destroy him. (3) A man with the dropsy (Luke 14: 1-6). This miracle is not discussed except, as was often the case, Jesus drew from it a lesson on Sabbath-day duty and work.

2. **The Discourses.** The following discourses belong to this part of his ministry. (1) A discourse on prayer (Luke 11: 1-13). Here we have a statement of the kind of prayer we should pray (direct, simple and brief) and that for which we should pray (God's glory and dominion over men, our daily physical needs, personal forgiveness and protection from temptation). We are also given two arguments for prayer—from the relation of neighbor, and from the relation of parent and child. Each shows that God will answer prayer. (2) The Pharisees exposed (Luke 11: 14-54). Much of this is similar to teachings that have been met before. In verses 37-54 especially, we have an account of his open rupture with the Jewish leaders. In the discussion he shows that service to God must come from within, that God is satisfied with nothing less than sacrificial love, and pronounces certain woes against the Pharisees and lawyers. (3) Discourse on trusting God and looking to Christ's judgment (Luke Ch. 12). In this chapter there is warning against covetousness, and the effort to save one's self; against the pursuit of riches, and the failure to confess Christ. There are lessons on truthfulness, faithfulness and watchfulness, and on the rewards of Christ's followers, and the punishment of evil doers. (4) The call to repentance (Luke 13: 1-9). In this we are shown both the need and the nature of repentance. The parable illustration of this truth shows that God, though long suffering, will finally punish the impenitent. (5) Whether few or many be saved and his conduct under threat of death (Luke 13: 23-35). Provoked by a question about how many shall be saved, he warned them not to fail themselves to enter the Kingdom. Provoked, also, by the threat

that Herod would kill him, he pronounced judgment upon Jerusalem. (6) Discourse at the Pharisee's table, and on counting cost of discipleship (Luke Ch. 14). Already we have mentioned verses 1-6. In verses 7-24 he tells us what we should do when we are bidden to the feast, and, to enforce these lessons, spoke the parables of the Ambitious Guest and the Great Supper. In verses 25-35 Jesus insists that men who desire to become his disciples should give the matter full consideration, and assures them that it will require sacrifice. (7) Concerning forgiveness and faith (Luke 17: 1-10). Here our Lord teaches that it is sinful to make it hard for another to live godly. He also points out the duty to forgive, and to live a life of faith and service.

3. **The Parables.** Already we have seen how large a place this section gives to parables. Our discussion may well be put under two heads. (1) Parables already covered. In the discussions of the miracles and discourses we have been introduced to the following parables: (a) The Rich Fool (Luke 12: 16-21), or the folly of trusting in earthly riches. (b) The faithful and unfaithful servants (Luke 12: 41-48) which teaches that the faithful shall be rewarded and the unfaithful punished. (c) The barren fig tree (Luke 13: 6-9) in which he emphasizes the opportunity and importance of repentance. (d) The ambitious guest (Luke 14: 7-14). Some have thought that this does not have the characteristics of a parable, but it is put down here because others list it as such. It teaches a lesson of humility and unselfish service. (e) The great supper (Luke 14: 15-24). In this parable we are taught the danger of rejecting the offers of mercy in Jesus. (f) Tower builder and king going to war (Luke 14: 28-33). These are, by many, not regarded as parables. They teach the importance of counting the cost of discipleship. (2) Other parables. There are five other parables here. (a) Three parables of grace (Luke ch. 15)—the lost sheep, lost coin and lost boy. In each there is the lesson that God rejoices in the repentance of any man. In each something of value is lost and found, and then a time of rejoicing is described. In the case of the forgiveness of the boy, its beauty is increased by contrasting the father's forgiving spirit with the ugly spirit of the older brother. (b) Two parables of warning (Luke ch. 16)—

the unjust steward, and the rich man and Lazarus. Both of these show the peril of rejecting Christ. They are instructive in showing us the right use of wealth. The first teaches the power of wealth to make friends, while the second suggests that it should be used to assist the needy, and not selfishly. Incidentally, the story of the rich man and Lazarus shows that worldly prosperity is not an assurance of divine favor, nor is affliction a sign of divine disfavor.

301. **Jesus Withdraws to Ephraim** (John 11: 47-54). Now that his life was in constant danger at the hands of his enemies, Jesus took his disciples and went into the little city of Ephraim, about twenty miles northeast from Jerusalem, where he tarried some time (John 1: 54) and instructed his disciples, and tried to prepare them for the events that were to come to pass during the Passover which was drawing nigh (John 11: 55).

302. **Teachings on the Way to Jerusalem.** Now that the Passover is approaching Jesus leaves Ephraim to go to Jerusalem. This is his final journey thither. He traveled along the line between Samaria and Galilee, crossed the Jordan and went down through Perea, and thence across by Jericho to Bethany. There was one miracle—healing the ten lepers. (Luke 17: 11-19). There were many of them in that section and there are many of them there now. They cry for help to everybody that passes. When they cried to Jesus for mercy he healed them. It is interesting to note that the whole company was healed, and that only one, a Samaritan, returned to give him thanks, and that he was also given the gift of spiritual healing. This journey is also made notable by many important teachings. (1) Concerning the Second Coming of Christ (Luke 17: 20—18: 8). This teaching grows out of the question of the Pharisees concerning the coming of his Kingdom. He first showed them that it is not a political Kingdom as they thought, but moral and spiritual and was already at work among them. He also pointed out that it would be useless to search for the coming of the Son of Man, but that it will be open and plain when he does come. He further told them that it will be unexpected, just as was the flood and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the parable of the unjust

judge (Luke 18: 1-8) he points out that, in connection with the second coming, God will finally vindicate his saints. (2) Concerning humility in prayer (Luke 18: 9-14). This story of the Pharisee and Publican teaches its own lesson and needs no discussion. (3) Concerning the separation of husband and wife (Matt. 19: 3-12; Mark 10: 2-12). Jesus admits the legality of divorce, but declares that it was admitted because of their hardness of heart, and not as a matter of right. He points out the divine purpose in the sexes, in marriage and in the oneness of man and woman after they have married, and that this union may not be broken except for the grossest sin. (4) Concerning the children (Matt. 19: 13-15; Mark 10: 13-16; Luke 18: 15-17). This incident was thrust into the midst of the discussion of divorce. It is significant that, while speaking of the husband and wife, he should be led to discuss the children also. He is interested in the whole family circle. He blessed the children, and then taught that it is necessary for adults to receive the Kingdom of Christ in the spirit of a little child. (5) Concerning how to obtain eternal life (Matt. 19: 16—20: 16; Mark 10: 17-31; Luke 18: 18-30). A rich young ruler came to Jesus, inquiring the way of eternal life. He was eager, courageous, candid and of beautiful disposition and moral life. In this outward matter no more was needed. The test which Jesus proposed (Matt. 19: 21, 22) was to discover whether he was willing to pay the price. Eternal life is secured through a faith that can surrender all else and trust all to God. In this case it turned on whether he could surrender wealth. In another case it might be something else. In the discussion that followed Jesus shows: (a) The danger of riches, lest the love of them should shut us out of the Kingdom of God. (b) That no more had been asked of this man than had been done by the apostles. They did not have so great wealth, but they forsook it all, fishing boats, tax gathering, etc. (c) By the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, that those who wholly trust all to him secure the fullness of blessing. It is not length of service, but faith, (6) Concerning his death and resurrection (Matt. 20: 17-19; Mark 10: 32-34; Luke 18: 31-34). This is the third time he has told them of this sad and glorious end. His

intense manner amazed and alarmed them, but they were not yet able to comprehend his full meaning. This time he predicts also the Roman trial in that he should be delivered "to the Gentiles." (7) Concerning greatness and position in the Kingdom (Matt. 20: 20-28; Mark 10: 35-45). The selfish ambitions of James and John were manifested here. They sought the chief places in his Kingdom. It is a sad picture, following, as it does, immediately upon his telling them that he was soon to be crucified. He used it to correct their worldly notion of the Kingdom as a physical, political empire. He made it an occasion for again foretelling his death, and also of showing them that high position in his Kingdom is based on unselfish service.

303. **His Work at Jericho.** Jesus now crosses the Jordan from Perea and comes to Jericho. This is a city of wonderful history. It was the scene of Joshua's great victory as he led the Children of Israel into Canaan. It was about five miles from the Jordan, about six miles northwest from the Dead Sea and about twenty miles northeast of Jerusalem. It was in a most fertile territory and had large commercial interests. Three matters claim our attention here. (1) The healing of two blind men (Matt. 20: 29-34; Mark 10: 46-52; Luke 18: 35-43). There were two Jerichos—the old city and the new Jericho, enlarged and established by Herod. The explanation of the fact that Matthew and Mark say they were going out of Jericho, while Luke says they were coming into it, may be that Matthew and Mark spoke of old Jericho, so sacred to Jews for whom they wrote, while Luke writing for Gentiles would have spoken of the modern Roman city. The blind men were probably between the two, which would have been a good place to beg. The cure of Bartimaeus is a wonderful demonstration of Christ's merciful response to faith. (2) The salvation of a rich publican—Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1-10). Like the young ruler he had wealth, much of it ill gotten. He was a chief publican, or contractor, for taxes. He probably let out to others the actual work. Jesus quickly saw that his spirit was right and responded to it. The willingness with which he responded to the commands of Jesus showed that his spirit was different from that

of the young ruler, and he was not required to sell all he had. He showed his change of heart by setting about to remedy the wrongs he had done. (3) Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19: 11-28). The hearts of the people had been filled with the subject of the rewards of the Kingdom. This parable shows that those rewards come only as a result of faithful work, and in proportion to the measure of that work. This truth is enforced by contrasting it with the punishment of the unfaithful.

304. **Jesus Anointed at Bethany** (Matt. 26: 6-13; Mark 14: 3-9; John 11: 55—12: 11). It was a stirring time. Throngs were going up to Jerusalem to the Passover. Jesus seems to have been the center of interest for these pilgrims who were wondering whether he would come to the feast. The chief priests and Pharisees had laid plans by which to take him (11: 55-57). While the crowds sought lodging in the city or in tents on Olivet, Jesus went to Bethany to the home of his dear friends, Martha and Mary and Lazarus. That night a supper was made for him at the home of Simon, the leper. Mary and Martha and Lazarus were all present, rejoicing to be in the presence of him to whom they owed so much. And Mary, whose love and gratitude knew no bounds, looking on Jesus as he reclined at the table and listening at his gracious words, was swept with emotion, and came forward and poured a vase of precious ointment upon him, probably beginning at his head and passing down to his feet. It was a spontaneous outburst of love that cost her about a year's wages for a laborer of that time. When some present criticised her Jesus rebuked them and showed that no act of genuine love for him should be harshly criticised. Moreover, he said it was an anointing for his burial, and thus again taught that he would soon die. The Jews now sought to kill Lazarus as well as Jesus (John 12: 9-11).

SECTION V. CHRIST COMPLETES HIS WORK

We come now to the culmination of Christ's earthly ministry. It is a time of the expression of his authority, a time of controversy, a time of fellowship with his disciples, a time of suffering and a time of triumph. The

loving purpose of Jesus and the bitter hatred of his enemies are set forth in sharp contrast. All else has looked toward this time when by death and resurrection he would complete the plan of redemption. Without this all the rest would have been useless. So important did they seem to the Gospel writers that one-fourth of Matthew and Mark, one-fifth of Luke, and nearly half of John are devoted to his death and resurrection and to those things connected with them. This section presents these matters.

305. **The Triumphal Entry** (Matt. 21: 1-11; Mark 11: 1-11; Luke 19: 29-44; John 12: 12-19). The city of Jerusalem was crowded with guests who had come to the Passover. They had come from all parts of Palestine and of the empire. Many of them had heard Jesus and more had heard of him. His recent active ministry, and especially the raising of Lazarus, had greatly increased his popularity, and also the hatred of his enemies. It was a fit time to declare his Kingship. Choosing an ass, which was a symbol of peace, instead of a horse, which was a symbol of war, he rode into the city in the midst of Messianic demonstrations. In this way he showed the nature of his reign as a peaceful reign in the hearts of men. This was no mere provincial procession, but one of profound significance. It has in it many and important teachings. It was his final offer of himself to Jerusalem and the official classes there, that they might yet have opportunity to accept him and save the nation. Every informed Jew knew that the Messianic King would enter Jerusalem riding an ass (Isa. 62: 11; Zech. 9: 9). He had, therefore, thrown aside all hesitancy about declaring his Messiahship, and had deliberately planned to publicly proclaim it. One may wonder, however, whether his disciples were disappointed when he simply surveyed everything in the temple and retired to Bethany, without following up these Messianic demonstrations with some bold act of power.

306. **First Day in Jerusalem.** On the next day after the Triumphal Entry Jesus returned to the city for the day. Two incidents are recorded. (1) He curses a fig tree (Matt. 21: 18-22; Mark 11: 12-14, 20-25). On his way to Jerusalem in the morning he was hungry and,

seeing a fig tree that, by its unusual foliage, boasted of unusual fruitfulness, Jesus went to it for figs. And, finding that it had none, he pronounced a curse upon it and it soon withered away. The disciples marveled that it died so quickly, and called Jesus' attention to it. He took it as an occasion to teach them a lesson of faith and prayer. This miracle is a parable as well as a miracle. It is a fit emblem of the Jewish capital and nation which was to perish because it rejected the Saviour. It well illustrates any individual or people, loud in profession, but wanting in the good works that prove the sincerity of the religious claims. (2) Second cleansing of the Temple (Matt. 21: 12-17; Mark 11: 15-19; Luke 19: 45-48). This seems to be a sequel to his survey of the Temple on the day before when, at the close of the Triumphal Entry, he looked around on it. He had cleansed it once before at the beginning of his ministry. It is here very meaningful. He had so ridden into the city the day before as to announce his Messiahship, and now he comes as Lord of his Temple to cleanse it.

307. **Christ's Last Appearance in the Temple.** There is something most solemn about the fact that Jesus is here, for the last time, seen in public. There are antagonisms, authoritative teaching, and the setting forth of the principles of his kingdom. There are so many things of great moment that we can do little but give an outline of them.

1. **His Authority is Questioned** (Matt. 21: 23-27; Mark 11: 27-33; Luke 20: 1-8). As soon as he began teaching the chief priests challenged his authority for what he had done and taught. They seem to have constituted a sort of deputation from the Sanhedrin to oppose Jesus. He recognized their insincerity and knew that they were trying to find fault with him. He, therefore, asked them a question about the baptism of John that utterly confused them. They did not dare to answer it, because they were not willing to face the alternative. To say that he was from men would have been to arouse the wrath of the people. To say he was from heaven would have been an acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Jesus to whom John had directly testified.

2. **Three Parables of Warning** (Matt. 21: 28—22: 14; Mark 12: 1-12; Luke 20: 9-18). Their question about his authority opened the way for three parables that revealed the spiritual blindness of their nation. (1) The parable of the two brothers. In this Jesus exposes the hardness of their hearts—that the most abandoned classes were more ready to receive him than the religious leaders of Israel. (2) The parable of the wicked husbandmen. In this parable the Jews saw that Jesus was attacking them and plotted violence against them. In it he had shown that on his own part God would displace them with Gentiles. The vineyard is the place where God put his men to work, the owner is God, the servants are prophets, the Son is Jesus, and the wicked husbandman is the Jews. The Jews will, therefore, be punished for their sins, and the Kingdom taken from them and given to another (Matt. 21: 43; Mark 12: 9). (3) The parable of the marriage of the king's son. The estimate which the people put on Christ's offer of salvation is portrayed in the miserable conduct of those who made excuses. By the destruction of the offending man those who treat lightly God's offer of mercy will be punished.

3. **The Jews' Three Hostile Questions and Christ's Unanswerable Question to Them** (Matt. 22: 15-46; Mark 12: 13-37; Luke 20: 19-44). Now that he had propounded these three parables that were both a warning and a condemnation, the Jewish leaders set about to ensnare him and to catch him in words, either treasonable or blasphemous. In this attempt they asked him three questions. (1) The question about tribute to Caesar. To deny that it was lawful would be treason to Caesar; to affirm its lawfulness would anger the Jews. His answer was marvelous for the way in which it showed that we have duties both to God and man. He indicated that he recognized all duties and would perform all. (2) The question about the resurrection. They took a very unusual case and intended to make Jesus and a belief in the resurrection appear as ridiculous as possible. But he did not fall into their trap. He showed that their assumption that the resurrection restores the present physical relations was false. He showed also that God is the God of the living and that the patriarchs were, therefore, still alive and possessed of immortality. (3) The question

about the great commandment of the law. The Jews probably disagreed about this question, but Jesus went right to the heart of it and summed it all up in supreme love to God and man. The answer was so conclusive that the scribe acknowledged that Jesus had answered correctly. He thereby acknowledged that true religion is inward and not external ceremony. This so completely answered the Jews that they ceased their attacks and asked no more questions of him. (4) **Christ's unanswerable question.** Jesus now turned upon his assailants and asked them a question out of which grew another that was unanswerable. They said Christ is David's son. But David had called him Lord. In human nature he is the son of David, but in divine nature he is his Lord. In this Jesus asserted that he was Lord of David, and put them where they must deny the meaning of the Scripture, or accept him as Messiah, or say nothing.

4. **Jesus Denounces the Scribes and Pharisees** (Matt. Ch. 23; Mark 12: 38-40; Luke 20: 45-47). The question over, Jesus laid down all restraints and poured out on his enemies the "pent up criticism of a life time." Thick and hot came his woes upon their hypocrisy. Never did lips speak sharper words of reproach and condemnation. He charged them with preventing others from entering the Kingdom of God; with influencing men to become worse than they were; with theological hair-splitting to evade the law; with ceremonial cleanliness without the true spirit of brotherly love; with inward corruption; with having the same murderous spirit of their fathers. The language seems very severe for Jesus, and he knew it would be fatal to him. But it was true and merited, and the time had come when hypocrisy must be exposed. On the conclusion of this terrible arraignment his enemies seem to have left him and planned his destruction.

308. **Three Closing Incidents of His Public Career.** The Jewish leaders have now left Jesus and the close of his public work is at hand. But before giving the story of his withdrawal with his disciples, three other incidents are recorded. (1) His comment on the widow's gift of two mites (Mark 12: 41-44; Luke 21: 1-4). This is a beautiful incident following close upon his great de-

nunciation of his enemies, and shows the tenderness of his heart. It goes beyond the outward act, and recognizes the motive, and teaches that the very essence of charity is the element of sacrifice there is in it. The amount left after the gift is of first importance. (2) The Gentiles seek Jesus (John 12: 20-36). This story gives us an insight into the heart and purpose of Jesus. It gives us the secret of the glory of Jesus. When he saw them coming he was reminded of his cross. He would be glorified, but he would come to that glory by the suffering of death. His cross would be the achievement of God's purpose in him and would overcome Satan, the enemy of God. Through it he would draw all men to him. (3) The Jews reject Jesus (John 12: 37-50). This is a summary of the evangelist (verses 37-43) and of Jesus (verses 44-50). John indicates that in the main men did not believe, though a few did but did not confess him. He sees in their rejection of him the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah (Ch. 53). The heart of the teaching of Jesus as recorded here is that whoever receives him receives the Father who sent him, and also has eternal life. These verses came as a sort of resume of Christ's work. Jesus has now withdrawn from the public (John 12: 37).

309. **Teachings on Mount Olivet—Destruction of Jerusalem** (Matt. Chs. 24, 25; Mark Ch. 13; Luke 21: 5-38). Jesus now goes out with his disciples to Olivet and there delivers one of the most notable of all his discourses. (1) The destruction of Jerusalem, Christ's second coming, and the end of the world. The disciples asked him about all these and he answered them together. He tells them of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and of the great suffering that would accompany it. He warned them against false Christs and false signs of his coming and declared that he will come in a way that all may know that it is he when he comes. He told them that there would be a downfall of Judaism and an establishment of Christianity. The discourse begins with a prediction of the fall of Jerusalem, and in the end tells of the final coming of our Lord, of the general judgment, and the permanent state of the good and bad. (2) Parabolic illustrations. Having made it clear that he would come again, and that there would be no trouble in knowing it

when he comes, Jesus seemed to warn them about expecting him to come too soon and illustrated his coming and the events connected with it by four parables. "The Wise Servant" (Matt. 24: 43-51), "The Ten Virgins" (Matt. 25: 1-13), "The Talents" (Matt. 25: 14-30), "The Sheep and Goats" (Matt. 25: 31-46). In these parables he taught his followers to be watchful and faithful in all that is entrusted to them and to be always ready for him to come. He impressed upon them that our conduct here determines the issues of life and death for us, and warned us that the judgment with its rewards and condemnation is sure to come. Here Matthew puts in a fourth prophecy of his death by Jesus (Matt. 26: 1, 2). It seems fitting to repeat it here in connection with this great discussion of his second coming.

310. **Chief Priests and Judas Conspire Against Jesus** (Matt. 26: 3-5, 14-16; Mark 14: 1, 2, 10, 11; Luke 22: 1-6). Here is one of the darkest pictures in all history. (1) The conclave of his enemies. In secret meeting they decided two things; first, that he must die, and second, that they would not murder him during the feast. They were afraid to lay hands on him in the presence of the friendly crowds lest they create a riot. (2) Judas bargains to betray him. Just as they were troubling as to what they should do Judas appeared on the scene and offered to sell him to them—for money, and a bargain was struck for about $20. It is significant that Jesus at one place was telling his disciples that he would suffer during this feast, the Jews at another place were deciding that they would not do it until after the feast closed, and that Judas was seeking the Jews to bargain to betray him. The motives of dishonesty and covetousness (John 12: 4-6) that prompted Judas, together with the issues involved, made this act the symbol of all that is bad in the human heart.

311. **Christ's Last Hours with His Disciples.** Jesus had now withdrawn from the crowd and was, for the last time, alone with his apostles. Three topics will cover the facts here.

1. **The Lord's Supper** (Matt. 26: 17-35; Mark 14: 12-31; Luke 22: 7-38; John 13: 31-38). The order of events in connection with it seems to be: (1) The pre-

paration for the Passover. (2) Strife among the disciples for a place of honor. (3) Beginning of the Passover supper. (4) Washing the disciples' feet with consequent teaching. (5) Jesus points out the betrayer. (6) Departure of Judas from the table. (7) The institution of the Lord's Supper. Now that we know fully the issues involved, we are shocked that at such a time as this the apostles should be disputing about honors. It is unseemly when compared with the sacrifice he was about to make. The memories of the Passover furnished Jesus the opportunity to give the disciples this new institution, as a symbol of the New Covenant which he was soon to seal with his blood. In this ordinance Jesus showed that his death was an essential part of his Messianic work. It forever keeps before us the lessons of Christ's death—that man is sinful, that God loves him, that sin may be forgiven, and man reconciled to God. The washing of the disciples' feet teaches a lesson of humility, very impressive, when compared to the honor-seeking disciples. He also teaches that men must have the cleansing he gives, if they are to have part with him.

2. **Christ's Farewell Address** (John Chs. 14-16). In these chapters Jesus spoke of the progress of his Kingdom, of the coming of the Comforter, and of the laws of spiritual growth. He told his disciples of the suffering and persecutions that they would have to endure, and of the one who would be with them to guide and help through it all. The whole section is very rich in teaching concerning the Holy Spirit. The disciples are shown their duty to obey and, in obedience, were promised, not only the help of the Holy Spirit, but also the abiding presence of Jesus and the Father. This address calls more for reflection than for explanation and discussion. The following outline will be helpful in reading it. (1) Comfort concerning his departure, 14: 1-4. (2) Declaration that he is the revelation of God, 14: 5-14. (3) Promise of the Comforter, 14: 15-21. (4) Promise that he and the Father will be with the obedient, 14: 22-24. (5) Renewed promise of the Comforter, 14: 25-31. (6) Allegory of the vine, 15: 1-17. (7) The world's hatred to Jesus and his disciples, and

the testimony to be given through the Spirit, 15: 18-27. (8) The world and the Comforter, 16: 1-11. (9) The disciples and the Comforter, 16: 12-15. (10) Christ's return will turn the sorrow of his departure into joy, 16: 16-24. (11) Summary and conclusion of the discourse, 16: 25-33.

3. **Christ's Great Intercessory Prayer** (John Ch. 17). (1) For himself (vers. 1-8). He wanted to be glorified with that glory which he had before the world was made. There were three reasons for this desire: first, that he might glorify the Father; second, because of his responsibility, growing out of the power given him to give men eternal life; third, because he had glorified the Father in finishing the work given him to do. (2) For his disciples (vers. 9-26). In this he included those present, and all who should ever believe on him. He asked that they might be preserved, prepared for the tasks committed to them, and finally united with him in glory. He prayed these things that they might have fulness of joy (v. 13), and then ended his ministry with them till after his death and resurrection.

312. **The Garden of Gethsemane** (Matt. 26: 36-56; Mark 14: 32-52; Luke 22: 39-53; John 18: 1-12). Here begins his actual suffering for the sins of men. Here is: (1) An hour of agony. The scene is too sacred for any cold speculation. A wave of sorrow sweeps over his soul and brings suffering "unto death" (v. 38). He has withdrawn from the disciples and is facing alone all that is involved in his rejection and shame and suffering for the sin of the world. Luke tells us of his bloody sweat (Luke 22: 44), which, in extreme cases of mental anguish, has sometimes resulted in immediate death. He also tells us that angels ministered to him (Luke 22: 43). His suffering and yielding to the will of the Father stands out in fine contrast against the weakness of his sleeping friends. (2) An hour of treachery. It would be hard to exaggerate the culpability of this crime. Just as Jesus arose from his supplications Judas and his band of soldiers came to arrest him. The amazing composure and self-control of Jesus stands out here. Peter made an impetuous attempt to defend the Saviour (John 18: 10). This furnished him

an opportunity to teach his disciples that vengeance did not belong to them, and also to show forth his great kindness. Christ is now led away to be tried and crucified.

313. **The Trial of Jesus.** This trial of Jesus was one of the greatest travesties on justice recorded in all history. It consists of two portions.

1. **The Jewish Trial** (Matt. 26: 57—27: 10; Mark 14: 53-72; Luke 22: 54-71; John 18: 13-27). This trial breaks up into three parts. (1) A preliminary hearing before Annas. While he was not high priest he had been and was the leader of the priestly party. (2) A trial before Caiaphas before day with only a part of the Sanhedrin present. (3) A trial before the whole Sanhedrin at daybreak. During these trials Jesus maintained a dignified bearing, and several times refused to testify. In doing this he not only acted within his legal rights, but showed the tendency of the trial toward unfairness and illegality.

Nine points of illegality in the trial are indicated here: (1) The private examination before Annas was directly against their criminal code. (2) To try criminals at night was illegal and was violated by the first trial before Caiaphas. (3) To pass sentence of death was forbidden until after one night had passed following the trial. (4) It was against their law to try a criminal on the day before a feast or Sabbath. (5) They condemned him without any legal charge against him. When the witnesses failed to agree the charge should have been dismissed and the prisoner discharged. (6) The high priests violated their law in trying to force Jesus to testify against himself (Mark 14: 60). (7) The outrageous conduct of the officers (Mark 14: 65) was illegal because it proceeded on the basis that he was already condemned. (8) They failed to keep the law that required judges who condemned a criminal to death to fast all day before pronouncing sentence. Their law required them to do all in their power to free the accused from the death sentence. They violated this law by doing all they could to find a way to condemn him.

During this trial two other incidents should be noted. (1) Peter's denial of Jesus. He no doubt aimed to be

brave, but was swept off his feet with fear, and thrice denied Jesus. The story warns us against any spirit of self-confidence or boastfulness. It also encourages us to repent and turn again to Jesus when we have sinned. (2) The remorse and death of Judas. He had probably watched the trial, and now that Jesus is condemned to die, he rushed into the presence of the council, the money burning into his soul, and threw it down, declaring that he had betrayed innocent blood. When he was spurned by them he went out and hanged himself (Matt. 27: 5; Acts 1: 18). He did not repent and seek Christ's blessing as did Peter. Remorse and repentance greatly differ. Judas represents the one, and Peter the other.

2. **The Roman Trial** (Matt. 27: 11-31; Mark 15: 1-20; Luke 23: 1-25; John 18: 28—19: 16). The Jews had now condemned him to death, but having no power to execute their sentence, carried him to Pilate. Here their religious charge against him would be of no value, and hence, they made a charge of treason against the Roman government. As in the case of the Jewish trial, there are three stages in the procedure. (1) Before Pilate, where they made several charges, but sustained none of them. (2) Before Herod. Herod hoped to see Jesus perform some miracle. But he would gratify none of the curiosity of Herod, and was sent back to Pilate after much mocking. (3) Before Pilate again. He now struggled long with his conscience and then delivered him over to the mob to be crucified. Both trials before Pilate were partly in private and partly in public. Three times he declared that Jesus was innocent and at least in two other ways tried to release him. But the accusing Jews caught him, where if he should release Jesus, they could bring a most grievous charge against him before Caesar, and he delivered him to be crucified. Thus ends a sixfold trial of treachery, hypocrisy, cowardice, selfish policy and savage brutality in which the innocent Son of God was condemned to die. Throughout it all Jesus was calm and dignified. He knew his rights, but refused to protect himself by throwing the slightest suspicion on the conception of his mission. No matter what abuse or ridicule he suffered he still held up the fact that he was the Son of God.

314. **His Death and Burial** (Matt. 27: 32-66; Mark 15: 21-47; Luke 23: 26-56a; John 18: 17-42). This is the event toward which all the ages have tended. Jesus now takes his place as the "Lamb of God" that he may suffer for the sins of men. It would be impossible to exaggerate the suffering and cruel torture of crucifixion. "It was the most cruel and shameful of all punishments." The Gospel writers, as well as other New Testament writers and speakers, lay stress upon the shame of it. To the Jews such a death was a sign of the curse of God. Several things are worthy of notice.

1. **The Journey to Golgotha.** When all preparations had been made the sad journey to Golgotha began. Jesus bearing his cross, was followed by two robbers, each bearing his cross and guarded by four soldiers. The distance was about three-quarters of a mile. On the way Jesus seemed to have fainted and they compelled Simon, a foreigner from Africa, to carry it (Luke 23: 26). Many women, "daughters of Jerusalem," followed Jesus, bewailing his fate. Jesus who had been silent under all sorts of insult was moved in pity for them and told them of the sorrow that was soon to come to them in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 23: 27-31).

2. **The Throng Who Saw.** Because of the feast, great throngs were in the city, and because Calvary was near the public highway, great multitudes were attracted by this fearful spectacle. These would constitute the crowd of curious on-lookers. There were also present some of his friends. These friendly watchers (John 19: 25-26) included the three Marys, John, the beloved, and doubtless many others; but all were helpless. The bitter enemies of Jesus were also there to mock him (Matt. 27. 39-44; Mark 15: 29-32; Luke 23: 35-37). They kept up their mocking from nine o'clock until noon, when darkness came over the earth.

3. **The Inscription Over Him.** The title given to him as "King of the Jews" is very significant. Old Testament prophets had declared that he would be a King. He had declared that he was their King. He was received as King when he came to Bethlehem. He was thus declared in his death to be King, and will finally be King of all kings. The three languages in which it was written rep-

resent the three great races that had prepared the world for his coming. In the language of religion, of culture and of law and government he was, therefore, declared to be King. It is suggestive that this last use of Hebrew in the Bible should have been to express such truth.

4. **The Story of the Two Robbers.** Their presence on either side would make his death appear all the more shameful. And they mocked with the crowd. But one changed his attitude. He rebuked his fellow-robber, confessed their guilt and the righteousness of their punishment, and in this supreme hour bore testimony to the innocence of Jesus. He also appealed in faith to him and was saved. The glory of his faith is not in its being in the eleventh hour, but that it should come from such an one, and against such odds. And what a contrast he experienced—in the morning condemned to die, in the evening received into heaven. Here also Jesus commits his mother to John (John 19: 25-27).

5. **The Miraculous Occurrences.** Here is much that impresses us with the presence of divine power. (1) Three hours' darkness. This began at noon and lasted for three hours. What went on under cover of this darkness we can not know. Jesus does not break its silence till 3 p.m. This darkness well illustrates the powers of darkness which seemed then to prevail, and of the great suffering of Jesus as he atoned for our sins. (2) The rending of the Vail of the Temple. It was from the top to the bottom and had a wonderful significance (Heb. 10: 19, 20). It suggests that the age of types is ended, the mystery around Israel's God removed, and the Holy of Holies opened to all men. (3) There was an earthquake. The period of darkness ended in an earthquake which seemed to open the graves so that many dead were raised, and after the resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor. 15: 20) appeared to many. All of this, together with the conduct and sayings of Jesus, profoundly impressed the centurion (Luke 23: 47), the crowds (Luke 23: 48) and his friends (Luke 23: 49).

6. **Sayings of Jesus on the Cross.** During the time he hung on the cross Jesus uttered seven sayings. (1) Luke 23: 34. (2) 23: 43. (3) John 19: 26-27. (4) Matt. 27: 46; Mark 15: 34. (5) John 19: 28. (6) John 19: 30. (7)

Luke 23: 46. In these sayings Jesus revealed his spirit and plans while undergoing this human outrage. There is here forgiveness, tender care, terrible suffering, and the triumphant note of the conqueror. Truly Jesus was the Son of God, and talked as no other could have done under like condition.

7. **Death and Burial.** This is the end of all. About three o'clock Jesus died and about six o'clock was buried. 34, 35). At the request of Joseph of Arimathea, Pilate The Romans made sure he was dead before they would allow him to be taken down (Mark 15: 44-45; John 19: allowed him taken down. He was buried by two friends, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. The tomb was then sealed and guarded, lest he fulfill his frequent prophecy that he would arise from the dead.

315. **From the Tomb to the Throne** (Matt. Ch. 28; Mark Ch. 16; Luke 23: 46b—24: end; John Chs. 20, 21; Acts 1: 3-11; 1 Cor. 15: 5-8). We cannot arrange a chronology of these facts that we are certain is correct. The events of the resurrection morning and the movements of the women that morning are the most perplexing problems. Four subjects are to be considered.

1. **The Resurrection.** Christ's resurrection had been predicted by prophets (Psalm 16: 10; Isa. 55: 3—Compare Acts 2: 25-31; 13: 34-37), and several times foretold by himself. But when he died the disciples were so taken up with sorrow and disappointment that they overlooked these prophecies. When he was buried it appeared that his cause was buried also. Certainly the hopes of the disciples were buried. They were weak and hopeless and seemed doomed to extinction. How then could this small group of poor and ignorant followers, with their cross of wood, triumph over mythologies, kings and armies and overcome the world? Only one answer can suffice—the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Had he not risen their hopes would never have revived. It showed that they had not a dead, but living and triumphant Saviour, and sent them out to conquer. It was, therefore, necessary that his resurrection be fully demonstrated, and it was so fully proven by his various appearances that it was never

doubted by the disciples and was a vital part of their messages forever thereafter.

2. **The Appearances.** There is no description of the resurrection itself. We are told that an angel came and rolled away the stone, and that there was an earthquake (Matt. 28: 2, 3) and we see the affrighted soldiers (Matt. 28: 4) hastening to the city to tell the chief priests (Matt. 28: 11-15). But Jesus appears frequently to his disciples (never to unbelievers). He shows himself to individuals and groups, to both men and women. We cannot be certain about the order of some of the appearances, but the following seems to be the order. (1) To Mary Magdalene. Mark 16: 9-11; John 20: 11-18. (2) To the women who came to the sepulcher with Mary. Matt. 28: 5-10. (3) To Simon Peter near Jerusalem, Luke 24: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 5. (4) To two disciples on the way to Emmaus, Luke 24: 13-31. (5) To the apostles, Thomas being absent, Mark 16: 14; Luke 24: 36-43; John 20: 19-23; 1 Cor. 15: 5. (6) To the apostles when Thomas was present, John 20: 24-29. (7) To seven disciples fishing on the Sea of Galilee, John 21: 1-24. (8) To the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, Matt. 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 15-18; Luke 24: 44-49. (9) To above five hundred, 1 Cor. 15: 6. (10) To James, 1 Cor. 15: 7. (11) To the eleven apostles on Mount Olivet when he ascended, Mark 16: 19, 20; Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1: 6-11. (12) To Paul, Acts 9: 1-9; 22: 6-11; 26: 12-18; 1 Cor. 15: 8; 9: 1.

3. **The Great Commission.** This last command seems to have been repeated on different occasions. Certainly at one time it was given when they were up in Galilee (Matt. 28: 16-20); and another when they were in Jerusalem (Luke 24: 33-49); and at another on Olivet near Jerusalem (Acts 1: 6-12). This mission includes all nations and all individuals in them. It involves teaching, preaching and witnessing, so that all may have a way to serve that is in harmony with their ability, and that a way may be found that will appeal to all. In preparation for this work they were promised the enduement of the divine power through the Holy Spirit. In doing this they were promised the presence and blessing of Jesus. Under this commission the work of world-wide missions has

gone forward for more than eighteen centuries, and will continue till the world is brought to the feet of Jesus, and he shall return again in his glory.

4. **The Ascension.** Forty days have now passed since the resurrection during which Jesus has taught his disciples concerning the Kingdom. Now he is ready to depart. He led them out to the Mount of Olivet, taught them again their duty, gave them a parting blessing and ascended into the heavens. This shed new light on the mission of Jesus. The old carnal dream of a literal kingdom soon began to vanish and his disciples soon were able to build for a spiritual Kingdom. The last picture of Jesus is not one of suffering on the cross, or of rest in the tomb, but one of a glorious and risen Lord, ascending with all power into heaven. With this also he left a promise that he would return again to earth with great glory, and that he is now at the right hand of God (Mark 16: 19; Luke 24: 50-53; Acts 1: 9-11).

316. **Teachings of the Story.** For obvious reasons we do not in this chapter give lessons or studies at the end of each section. It is better to survey the whole story first and then set down some results of our studies.

1. **Teachings Concerning Christ's Humanity.** (1) He grew and developed as any normal child. (2) His education and work was that of any natural person. (3) The whole of his childhood was set in divine manifestations. (4) In life he showed all the effects of hunger, sorrow, etc., found in any normal man, and satisfied these wants as does any other.

2. **Teachings Concerning His Super-Human Power.** He exercised power: (1) Over physical nature; (2) Over sickness and physiological defects; (3) Over life and death; (4) Over demons and all spiritual powers; (5) Over sin to forgive it.

3. **Teaching in General.** Christ's teachings were many, but the following are especially important to keep ever before us. (1) That the Old Testament Scriptures are true. (2) The holiness and goodness and love of God. (3) Man's sinfulness and need of salvation. (4) The value and necessity of repentance and faith as a means of bringing men into the favor of God. (5) His own

duty and oneness with the Father. (6) The work and power of the Holy Spirit. (7) The purpose and work of the Kingdom and church. (8) The nature and power of prayer. (9) The value of spiritual and worthlessness of formal worship. (10) The true way to greatness through service.

4. **Teachings Growing Out of the Crucifixion.** (1) It proves the willingness of God to forgive sin. (2) It shows the great evil of sin that costs so much to save us from it. (3) It shows the need of cleansing before we can enter heaven. (4) It shows how God loves and values a soul. (5) It shows the value of salvation and the worth of eternal life. (6) It furnishes a motive for turning away from sin that so offends God and endangers us. (7) It brings hope of forgiveness and cleansing.

5. **Teachings Concerning the Resurrection and Ascension.** They prove: (1) That Jesus is the Son of God. (2) That there is another life beyond this. (3) That we shall all be resurrected. (4) That we shall know in the next life our loved ones of this life. (5) That our lives here have an influence and meaning beyond the grave.

317. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) Master all the material given in this chapter and make a careful study of all Scriptural references. (2) Study the geography of the country. (3) List all the divine manifestations in connection with the childhood and youth of Jesus. (4) Outline the entire career of John the Baptist, beginning with the vision of Zacharias before his birth. (5) Study in outline the Sermon on the Mount. (6) Find examples showing Christ's power exerted in each of the five directions suggested in "2" of the "Teachings of the story" given above. (7) Discuss any outstanding events in the life of Jesus and his disciples (such as calling the twelve and the great confession) that seem to be epoch-making in their influence. (8) Read and discuss Jesus' farewell address to his disciples. (9) Study carefully the Scriptures covering the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. (10) Study the Scriptures covering the resurrection period and outline further the events and teachings.

MAP OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE AND TRAVELS.

CHAPTER VII

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY BY THE WORK OF THE DISCIPLES

Acts—Revelation

From the Ascension of Jesus to the End of the Apostolic Age, A.D. 100

INTRODUCTORY

318. **Sources of History.** The sources of our information are four: (1) The book of Acts. The purpose of this book aims to trace the growth and development of the movement inaugurated by Jesus as it was carried on by the disciples after his ascension. It lays special stress upon the work among the Gentiles. And, while it does not claim to give a complete account of the labors of the early apostles, it does give in a simple, definite and impressive manner an account of how the religion was propagated after his death, and of how it was received by those to whom it was first preached. (2) Historical references in the Epistles. There are twenty-one epistles, and from them may be gathered many facts concerning the experiences of this period. (3) The book of Revelation. This book gives us a scene in the life of the Apostle John, long after the other apostles had died. It also tells us much of the conditions of the world and of the churches. (4) The non-canonical books of early Christians. There are several of these and they throw much light on the situation of Christianity during these times. Our main source will be the book of Acts.

319. **Changed Conditions.** Here we come into a new dispensation. In the Gospels the message and field were restricted. They preached that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand, but could not preach his death and resurrection and reigning glory, nor could they preach beyond Palestine. During this period they preach Christ in the fulness of his redemptive work anywhere in the world. Here also the Spirit of God, in his illuminating and sanctifying power, is leading and blessing the disciples. In the Old Testament the Father was the active agent, in the Gospels Jesus, and in Acts and ever thereafter, the Holy Spirit. Until he came and endued them with power the apostles were very ordinary men, but afterward they were triumphant workers. Throughout this period the Spirit manifested himself in a supernatural way. With the coming of the Holy Spirit the ceremonial law of Moses was abrogated, the time of special favors to Israel ended, and salvation was offered to Gentiles on the same basis that it was offered to Jews. The Spirit would now reprove the whole world of sin and righteousness and judgment.

SECTION I. CHRISTIANITY SPREADS IN PALESTINE

(Acts Chaps. 1-12)

320. **Preparation for Witnessing** (Acts 1:1—2:4). The means by which the religion of Jesus was to spread was to be the work and witnessing of his disciples. But before they began they must be prepared for it. These verses tell of that preparation. (1) Christ's last instructions and ascension. Some discussion of this ha been given above under the heads of the great commission and ascension. They were told their duty as witnesses and were promised power from heaven with which to perform it, and were instructed not to leave Jerusalem or begin until they received this power. (2) The election of Matthias. While they waited in the upper room and prayed daily for the Holy Spirit, Peter called their attention to the need of someone to take the

place of Judas in their number, and they elected Matthias. The incident is valuable in two important ways. First, it shows the simple democracy of the disciples. Two brethren were urged for the place, but when the majority fell to Matthias, all were satisfied, and he was counted among them. Second, it explains the essential qualifications of an apostle. He must be able to testify from personal knowledge, and especially so, concerning the resurrection of the Saviour (Acts 1: 21, 22; 1 Cor. 9: 1). (3) The coming of the Holy Spirit. Christ died at the Passover, and the Spirit came during Pentecost, fifty days later. There were accompaniments that appealed both to the eye and ear. There was sound as of a wind, but not wind. There were flames—like tongues, but not flames. The effects on the disciples were immediately seen. They not only became pure and lost their carnal conceptions of the Kingdom, but were given supernatural insight and power. It was heaven's answer to the earth's rejection of Jesus. Pentecost was the public announcement that he had exchanged his crown of thorns for one of glory. With the Spirit the people were convinced of the reality of Christ's Messiahship and were converted unto him.

321. **Peter's Sermon—The First Witnessing** (Acts 2: 5-47). In this section we are introduced to the beginning of the work of the disciples. The witnesses, the hearers, the message and the result are all indicated. It is all the more important since it is the very first effort since Jesus left to win men to him. The hearers were Jews, born in twenty different countries. The witnesses included all the disciples, but we are given the message of Peter and the results that follow. The sermon is a very interesting one. After a brief introduction, calculated to remove the prejudice of the hearers, Peter employs four arguments to prove that Jesus is the Christ. (1) By his works, which were well known. (2) By his death, which was the very plan of God unconsciously worked out by wicked men. (3) By his resurrection, which had been long foretold by prophets and now witnessed to by the apostles who had seen him after death. (4) By his exaltation to the right hand of God and the outpouring of the Spirit

which they were then witnessing. In it all he kept himself in the background. He condemned sin, had a word for the penitent and instruction for those who had received the truth.

The results of this sermon are immediate and powerful. (1) There was deep conviction for sin. (2) There was inquiry into the way of life. (3) There was a definite answer that made plain, not only how to be saved, but how to live after one is saved. (4) There was instant and ready obedience. Three thousand believed, were baptized and added to the church. (5) There was a consequent faithfulness in the truth of the gospel. Taken as a whole, we see thousands turning away from old to new spiritual guides, accepting new ordinances and, by abandoning the individual title to their possessions, establishing a community of good.

322. **First Struggles and Growth of the Jerusalem Church** (Acts Chaps. 3-7). In this section are many important incidents and facts. The most important are:

1. **The First Persecution** (Acts 3: 1—4: 31). The story here emphasizes three things. (1) The first miracle. Peter and John healed a lame man at the beautiful gate of the Temple. The man then went with them into the Temple leaping and praising God. (2) The sermon of Peter. Excited by the wonder of the miracle, a vast crowd gathered around Peter and John. This furnished Peter an occasion to follow up the work of Pentecost. He declared that Jesus whom they slew was truly the Christ and that he had been raised from the dead, and demanded that they repent and return from sin to Jesus. The effect of this discourse was to increase the number of believers to about five thousand. (3) The arrest of the apostles. Being grieved that they taught the resurrection, the Sadducees put Peter and John into prison, and the next day brought them before the Sanhedrin. They boldly owned before these judges that the man was healed through the power of the risen Christ, and that there was no salvation except through him. (4) They were newly anointed with the Holy Spirit. Because of fear of the people the Sadducees released Peter and John, who returned to the dis-

ciples where they prayed, and the power of the Spirit came upon them.

2. **Blessed State of the Church** (Acts 4: 32—5: 42). (1) Its unity and love (4: 32-37). This follows the story of the first persecution. It is a beautiful picture of self-sacrifice for the common good. All saw and loved and desired the same thing. (2) Sin and death of Ananias and Sapphira (5: 1-16). These two sought the honor of self-sacrifice without making the sacrifice and were exposed and destroyed. In this God honored the church by purging and keeping it clean. The first death among the apostles was a traitor and suicide, and the first in the apostolic church was that of hypocrites and liars. Their death was followed by a period of wonderful popularity. (3) The release of the disciples (5: 17-42). This is the second persecution. All of the apostles were put into prison, but were released by an angel, and went to the Temple and taught. When arrested again they boldly declared that, in obedience to God, they would continue to preach Jesus. After being beaten they were released and continued to preach. By releasing them from prison God had again endorsed them. With such love and unity and growth and divine endorsement the church may well be called blessed.

3. **First Deacons and First Martyr** (Chaps. 6, 7). The church had now grown until there was need for further organization. (1) Seven deacons were elected. To them were assigned the more temporal duties of the church work, that the apostles might be free to do the religious teaching. We are told that great growth came to the church after this enlargement of organization. (2) Stephen arraigned before their court. While doing his work as a deacon Stephen performed many miracles, and overcame all opponents in argument. They, therefore, caused his arrest and employed men to make very serious charges against him. (3) His reply or defense. This address (all of chapter) is, for the most part, a survey of Jewish history. He so uses this history as to show that they always rejected God's way, then suffered awhile, and finally had to accept what they first rejected. The point was, that God sent them Jesus, they rejected him, they would now suffer for it, and

sometime would accept him. This so enraged them that they stoned him to death. His death probably led at least in part, to the conversion of Paul and was thereby compensated.

323. **The Work Spreads Out into Palestine** (Acts Chaps. 8-12). This work includes the spread of Christian influence to the Gentiles. Persecution that followed the death of Stephen caused the members of the church to be scattered throughout all Judea and Samaria, and wherever they went they preached Christ. To follow all their movements is not possible, but much of interest is told us.

1. **Successful Work of Philip** (Chap. 8). Of all of the work of the scattered Christians only that of Philip is related. He was one of the seven deacons. Two incidents are given. (1) His successful work in Samaria. Following the footsteps of the Saviour who had introduced his teachings to these half Jews before going out to those in no wise related, he went to Samaria where great success attended his labors, even Simon Magus, the sorcerer, openly avowing discipleship. (2) His work endorsed by the apostles. The news of his success spread to Jerusalem, and the church there sent Peter and John to investigate it. They were satisfied with the work and gave to the Samaritan Christians the power of the Holy Spirit. They preached the gospel there, and then returned to Jerusalem, preaching on their way to the people of many Samaritan villages. (3) The conversion of the eunuch. God directed Philip to leave Samaria and go into the south, where he met an Ethiopian, the treasurer of the queen of that country. Led by the Holy Spirit, he instructed, and after his avowal of faith in Jesus, baptized this eunuch. The man went on his way rejoicing in his new-found faith, while Philip went to Caesarea where many years later we shall hear of him. It is impossible to tell whether the eunuch was a Grecian Jew or a Gentile.

2. **The Conversion of Saul** (9: 1-31). The conversion of Saul was the most important event in Christian history after Pentecost. He left an impress on Christianity far beyond that of any other who has lived. If we include with the books which he wrote the Gospel of

Luke and the book of Acts, written by Luke, who was influenced and directed by Paul, half of the New Testament is of Pauline origin. After his conversion he preached in Damascus, and later in Jerusalem, where his life was endangered, and the brethren sent him away to Tarsus, the city of his birth. It is interesting to know that by this time there were churches in Judea, Samaria and Galilee. The work had prospered, and now that Saul was converted and the Jewish rulers had no leader, the persecution of these churches ceased for a while (9: 31).

3. **Important Work of Peter** (Acts 9: 32—11: 18). This section follows the activities of Peter. (1) He healed Aeneas. Now that persecution had ceased to affect them so terribly Peter left Jerusalem and made a tour of cities in the district. At Lydda he healed Aeneas, and all who dwelt in Lydda, and Saron accepted the new faith. (2) He raised Tabitha from the dead. When this good woman died at Joppa the disciples sent to Lydda for Peter, who came down and raised her to life. This led many in Joppa to become Christians. (3) The conversion of Cornelius. The time had now come when the influence of the church should break from Jewish bounds and reach and bless the Gentiles. Samaritans were half Jews, but Christ must go beyond them to the Gentile world. This is a turning point in the story. (a) There was preparation for this move. Cornelius, a Roman centurion of Caesarea, had a vision that prepared him, causing him to send to Joppa for Peter. A vision also prepared Peter by showing him not to call any men unclean, and instructing him to go with the messengers of Cornelius. (b) Conversion of Cornelius and his household. When they arrived at Caesarea Cornelius explained his vision to Peter, who then preached to the household and friends of the centurion. While speaking the Spirit fell upon them and they spake with tongues, after which they were baptized. (c) When Peter returned to Jerusalem he was obliged to defend before the church his conduct in going to the Gentiles. When he related all to them the Jerusalem brethren glorified God that he had also granted repentance to Gentiles. The Holy Spirit, con-

trary to the usual way, came upon them before baptism. It was a sort of Gentile Pentecost in which God authenticated the Gentile work.

4. **Center of Labor Changed to Antioch** (Acts 11: 19-30). Some of those scattered abroad at the death of Stephen went up to Antioch in Syria. At first they preached to Greek-Jews, but later to the Gentiles. The church at Jerusalem heard of this work and sent Barnabas to Antioch to bring news concerning it. When he saw the nature of the work there he rejoiced and himself preached to them. He then went to Tarsus and secured Saul and together they spent a year at work in Antioch. They then went to Jerusalem to carry an offering to their drought-stricken brethren there. This was the development of a new leader and a new center for Christian work. From the time Paul came to Antioch he took leadership, and ever afterward was in the forefront of the whole enterprise. Antioch was the greatest center of population and culture in Asia, and was far better suited as a center for world-wide evangelism than Jerusalem.

5. **Persecutions of Herod** (Acts Chap. 12). This is the fourth Jewish persecution. Herod put to death James, the brother of John, and, because it pleased the Jews, put Peter into prison to be slain next day. Through the prayers of the church, an angel of God miraculously released Peter, and Herod had the keepers put to death. This Herod was Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, who slew the babes of Bethlehem, and son of the Herod who beheaded John the Baptist. Because he gave not glory to God, God smote Herod and he died. This was a punishment upon him, but a blessing upon Christianity which now rapidly grew. The period closes with Paul and Barnabas together, and with John Mark back in Antioch.

324. **Important Considerations About the Church.** From the whole period we may learn several things about the church.

1. **As to Organization and Control.** Jesus left it with but little organization. It elected Matthias to take the place of Judas, and when they were needed elected deacons. Here is indicated the principle that

organization should be increased as the need for it arises. In all of this the church, as a whole, transacted the business. While the apostles had great influence they did not dictate, but put all responsibility upon the church as a democratic and self-governing body.

2. **As to Persecutions.** The Pharisees led in the persecution of Jesus, but the Sadducees led in opposing the early church. Their persecutions, however, rapidly deepened and widened. First they were given a public hearing, commanded not to teach in the name of Jesus and let go. In the next instance, after being beaten, they were released because of the appeal of Gamaliel. The universal aspect of the teaching of Stephen led the Pharisees to join the Sadducees, and their joint persecutions led to his death and the scattering of the disciples from Jerusalem. Next the Romans joined the Sanhedrin in trying to suppress the brethren. This is evidenced by Herod putting to death the apostle James, and his purpose to kill Peter. None of these persecutions moved the church from its duty. They not only went everywhere preaching, but openly proclaimed that they would not refrain from preaching what they considered their duty to God. They hurled their doctrine into the teeth of their antagonists.

3. **As to its Growth.** Their courageous preaching could not fail of results. Chapter two tells of three thousand added to them in one day, and others day by day; chapter four shows that their number had grown to five thousand; chapter five says that multitudes of believers, both men and women, were added to them; chapter six reports that "The disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." The fact that many priests, most of whom were Sadducees and had been active in persecuting the disciples, now accepted their teaching is very suggestive as to their success.

4. **As to the Spread of its Work to the Gentiles.** This is one of the most interesting topics of the period. First, Philip carried the gospel to the Samaritans (half-bred Jews) and his work was endorsed by Peter and John, both by bestowing the Holy Spirit upon the Samaritans, and by preaching to Samaritan cities. Second,

Peter, on a preaching tour, stayed in the home of Simon, the tanner, which was counted unclean, thus showing that he was coming to be less bound by the ceremonies of the Levites. Third, Peter carried the gospel to Cornelius who was saved, and when the church at Jerusalem heard the story of this work, it praised God and acknowledged that he granted salvation to the Gentiles. Fourth, the work spread to Antioch, where many Gentiles were saved, and Paul, the chosen apostle to the Gentiles, assumed leadership.

325. **Teachings of the Story.** (1) Men can succeed in a right cause in spite of opposition—seen everywhere in the story. (2) Popularity is not a necessary prerequisite to success in Christian work—see Peter, the whole church unpopular. (3) Small numbers are not a sign of weakness and do not foretoken defeat. (4) Gospel truth, courageously preached, can win its way in the hardest hearts—see the conversion of many priests. (5) Consciousness of a duty divinely imposed is the most powerful stimulus to action. It is the surest foundation for a real courage. (6) The Holy Spirit must give success in Christian work.

326. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The Great Commission. (2) The first church conference, 1: 15-26. (3) Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost—analyze it. (4) The death of Ananias and Sapphira. (5) Stephen's address of defense—analyze and discuss it. (6) The liberality of these early Christians and their provision for the poor. (7) The place of prayer in the work of these disciples—cite all examples and results. (8) All references to the Holy Spirit and his work—list them. (9) The outstanding teachings concerning Jesus—give references. (10) Concerning the resurrection—cite passages. (11) All the miracles of the period—list them. (12) The chief elements of power and success seen in these early disciples, especially those other than the Holy Spirit.

SECTION II. CHRISTIANITY SPREADS AMONG THE GENTILES—PAUL THE LEADER

Acts 13-28, and all the rest of the New Testament except the Epistles of John and the Book of Revelation.

327. **Changed Situation.** Here the whole story abruptly changes. Hitherto the gospel has spread only within Palestine. Now it is to break over and enter upon its career as a world conquering power. We cease to study Christianity's struggle in a Jewish territory and give attention to its conflict in heathendom. The center of work is also shifted. Jerusalem has been the headquarters of the entire movement. Henceforth Antioch, the capital of the Greek province of Syria, the residence of the Roman governor of the province, claims that place. In the following studies we shall often turn our thoughts to Antioch instead of Jerusalem. Here, too, we cease to study many and various persons and their work, and center it upon the life and labors of Paul.

328. **Paul Up to This Time.** As to the life of Paul up to this time some things should be recalled. (1) He was a Roman citizen by birth, a Jew by race, and a Pharisee by religious training (Acts 22: 3; Phil. 3: 5). He was born in Tarsus in Cilicia and educated at Jerusalem by Gamaliel. (2) He became a persecutor of the church, being party to the murder of Stephen (Acts 7: 58—8: 3). (3) He was wonderfully converted and became a preacher, Acts 9: 1-19. (4) As a Christian we know several things about him. (a) He preached with power in the synagogue at Damascus, 9: 20-22. (b) He went into Arabia (9: 23-25 and Gal. 1: 17). "Many days" in Acts are probably the "three years" of Galatians. (c) At Jerusalem (9: 26-29). He evidently returned to Damascus where the Jews planned to kill him. But being let down over the wall of the city he escaped to Jerusalem where, after Barnabas had certified his conversion and preaching, he was received by the church. (d) At Tarsus (9: 30). On account of an effort to kill him at Jerusalem, the disciples carried him to Caesarea and sent him to Tarsus, the city of his nativity. There he did a work that gladdened the

brethren (Gal. 1: 23-24). (e) At Antioch and Jerusalem (Acts 11: 25-30; 12: 25). Under the influence of Barnabas, Saul went from Tarsus to Antioch and spent a year in teaching. A famine at Jerusalem led the church at Antioch to send him and Barnabas down there to carry relief. When this task was finished they returned to Antioch, bringing with them John Mark. This is where the last section left Saul, and where we now begin to trace his great missionary work.

329. **Divine Call and Missionary Impulse.** The church was assembled and in prayer. Probably they were concerned about a wider evangelism, and the call of the missionaries may have come in answer to their prayers. The Holy Spirit instructed their prophets and teachers to send forth Paul and Barnabas to do the work to which he had called them. At the very outset the Holy Spirit takes charge of the missionary enterprise. He inaugurates, directs and promotes it. When the call came it is probable that Paul had little idea of the magnitude of the work which he was to do. He was perhaps not aware that his work and teaching would change the religion and philosophy of the whole world.

330. **Time and Extent of Paul's Journeys.** The most of his work was accomplished during three great missionary journeys. The time occupied for these journeys and the distance traveled has been estimated as follows: the first journey 1,400 miles, requiring three years —A.D. 48-50: the second journey 3,200 miles and three years' time—A.D. 51-54; the third journey 3,500 miles, requiring four years—A.D. 54-58; or a total of 8,100 miles and ten years of labor. To this must be added his journey to Rome, which required a whole winter, and was about 2,300 miles, besides many side trips of which we have no record. He endured four years of imprisonment—A.D. 58-63, two of which were spent in Caesarea and two in Rome. It is commonly thought that he was released from prison after the two years at Rome and that he again entered upon mission work that probably lasted about four years. (A.D. 63-67) and carried him again into Macedonia, Asia Minor, Crete and Spain. This theory, which has much to commend it, is coupled with the view that he was again impris-

oned at Rome (A.D. 67-68) and there suffered martyrdom. The whole time would then be twenty years and would make him cover far more miles of travel than we know.

331. **First Tour** (Acts 13: 4—15: 35). The company on this journey consisted of Saul and Barnabas and John Mark. The story falls into three divisions. (1) Work in Cyprus (13: 4-12). The first field was the Isle of Cyprus. It was in sight of the main land and was the native land of Barnabas. Entering at Salamis, the old Greek capital, they passed through the island to Paphos, the Roman capital where Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor, became a believer. His conversion was opposed by Elymas, a sorcerer, but Saul, conscious of the divine power resting on him as an apostle, smote him with blindness. From this time forward Saul is the acknowledged leader and is called Paul. (2) Work in Asia Minor. From the port of Perga John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas pressed on through the rugged mountain district and visited successively Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. At Antioch the Jews rejected his message and he made a complete break with them and turned to the Gentiles. At Iconium they performed many miracles, but fled when the unbelieving assaulted them; at Lystra, where Paul healed a lame man, they were first worshiped, and then Paul was stoned until they thought he was dead. (3) The return to Antioch (14: 20-28). From Lystra they went to Derbe and taught many. From there they retraced their steps, confirming the faith of the disciples, and ordaining elders in every church, except that they did not go through Cyprus. When they arrived at Antioch they reported concerning their work, and abode there for some time. (4) A council at Jerusalem (15: 1-35). This visit was marked by a notable council at Jerusalem. At this council it was decided that Gentile Christians were not bound by the requirements of the Jewish law. They did not have to be circumcised and become Jews to be saved. This decision was instrumental in determining that Christianity was not simply a new branch of Judaism, but a new religion. The decision was re-

ceived with great joy and furnished the happy settlement of a controversy that threatened to destroy the success of the gospel. It was followed by a rapid growth of influence.

332. **Second Tour** (Acts 15: 36—18: 22). (1) Separation of Paul and Barnabas (15: 36-41). They were agreed in a desire to visit the places where they had preached, but Paul refused to carry John Mark, Barnabas' cousin (Col. 4: 10), with them. When they could not agree, Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus, but we have no record of their work. Paul took as his companion, Silas, who had returned with him from the council at Jerusalem. (2) Visit to Asia Minor. Going overland through Syria and Cilicia, he made the proposed visit to the scene of his former labors. At Lystra he found a young disciple named Timothy, who had been religiously reared (2 Tim. 1: 5), and who was of good report among the brethren there. Timothy joined him in the journey, and from this time forward was one of Paul's most intimate associates and fellow-workers. By this time Paul's plans had enlarged and he pushed on to further conquests. But God had still larger plans for him. By the Holy Spirit he restrained Paul on the right and left so that he could not follow his own desire to work in Asia Minor, and was led to Troas on the Aegean Sea, where, through a vision, God directed him to go to Europe. (3) At Philippi—planting the gospel in Europe. Luke joined them at Troas. They crossed the Aegean Sea, passed through Samothracia and Neapolis, and came to Philippi, the chief city of the district. Three important incidents mark their visit here—the conversion of Lydia, a prominent merchant woman, the casting out of the spirit of divination from a demoniac slave girl, and imprisonment of the apostles and conversion of the jailer. (4) On the way to Corinth. Leaving Philippi they came to Thessalonica, the chief city of Macedonia. Here a few Jews and a multitude of Greeks believed. But unbelieving Jews raised a riot, and the missionaries fled to Berea. Here they received a more cordial consideration, the people seeking earnestly to know the truth concerning their message. But Jewish enemies from Thessalonica interrupted this suc-

cessful work, and made it necessary for Paul to leave Berea. He went to Athens where he remained some time. He delivered there one of the most notable of all his addresses. While he was not persecuted there, only a few believed, and he departed to Corinth, where he found a more fruitful field. (5) Long stay at Corinth. He spent a year and a half in this great commercial metropolis. While there he built a great church. The work in Europe has now resulted in strong churches at Philippi, Thessalonica and Corinth, to each of which he later wrote letters that have come down to us in the Bible. (6) Return to Antioch. Silas and Timothy appear to have remained in Corinth, or to have gone back to Macedonia. He took Aquila and Priscilla with him to Ephesus where, after preaching for a brief season and promising to return, he left them and departed for Antioch. He landed at Caesarea, greeted the church there, probably went up to Jerusalem and visited the Church there, and then hastened on to his beloved Antioch. So ends the second and wider journey.

333. **Epistolary Literature.** As the disciples multiplied and Churches sprang up in various places, many perplexing problems arose to disturb the peace of these new converts. In their extremity the brethren sometimes appealed to the leaders of the new faith to help them solve these problems. Sometimes these leaders saw that these conditions threatened to undermine the happiness and prosperity of the Churches, even before the Churches realized it. To meet these conditions letters were written, discussing the problems of the time. This custom gave rise to the epistolary literature which encompasses a large portion of the New Testament, and includes all the books from Romans to Jude. In this group are several types of letters—some to particular Churches, some to people of a particular nationality, some for Christians of a particular district, some for public use and some private or personal. Some of these were of a strictly pastoral type, in which the affairs of the Church, or of the person addressed are referred to, and various instructions given, touching their conduct. Others are in the nature of treatises, in which there is a formal and ordered ex-

position of some great Christian conception. Still another group, often called general epistles, sums up, in one deliverance, the writer's whole conception of truth and life.

334. **Epistles of the Tour.** During the stay at Corinth Paul wrote First and Second Thessalonians and probably Galatians. At this point these epistles should be read. The author's "The Bible Book By Book" provides a brief, but ample, introduction to each, and an outline guide for the study of each.

(1) **Epistles of Paul.** In our study of the work of Paul as a missionary and later as a prisoner we are obliged to consider the letters which he wrote to different churches and individuals. Each should be studied in its place and the first of his writings were sent forth while on this journey. Taken as a whole these letters may be divided into four groups as follows: (1) The Escatological Group—those dealing with the second coming of Christ and things connected with his coming. These are First and Second Thessalonians. (2) The Anti-Judaic Group—those growing out of the conflicts with Judaizing teaching. They are First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans. (3) The Christological Group—those whose teachings center in the character and work of Jesus and grow out of his ministry while in prison. They are Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Hebrews, if Paul wrote Hebrews. (4) The Pastoral Group—those written to young preachers touching the matters of the church and its organization and government with some practical instructions for evangelists and other Christian workers. They are First and Second Timothy and Titus.

Paul's letters easily fall into a few simple divisions. There is first an introduction which may consist of a salutation only, or may have a prayer for the church or person to whom he is writing. It may indicate some of the conditions which furnish the occasion for writing the epistle. Second, there is a doctrinal section in which he discusses some great Christian teaching. Third, a practical section in which he sets forth the application of the Christian doctrine to life and conduct. Fourth, a personal section in which he sometimes sent personal

messages and salutations to different friends and from different friends. Fifth, a conclusion. Each of the books may be studied with practically this same outline.

(2) **First Thessalonians.** The city of Thessalonica is about a hundred miles west of Philippi and was a center of great importance during Paul's time. Indeed, through all the centuries to the present it has continued to be a city of considerable influence in the life of the people near the Aegean Sea. It has been one of the business centers of Macedonia. The church there was founded by Paul on his second missionary journey, and soon became one of the strongholds of Christianity. It was early called the "Orthodox City." On account of the persecution of the Jews Paul left there and went to Berea where he was well received by the Jews who lived there, but later he went on to Athens and then to Corinth where he spent eighteen months.

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians is probably the first of all the written documents of the New Testament. It would then be the first deliverance of the Christian religion in written form. It is not primarily doctrinal and has in it no element of controversy. It is one of the most devotional and affectionate of all of Paul's letters and is notable for its salutations. The main idea in the book is that of consolation. Its keynote and hope are found in such words as ascension and advent. Paul sent his affectionate greetings and endeavored to console them in connection with their afflictions and to correct their wrong views of the second coming as well as to urge them to know the highest type of moral life.

The following outline will form as a sort of guide for the student in reading the book: (1) The spiritual condition of the church, Ch. 1. (2) Paul's character and conduct while with them, 2: 1-16. (3) Paul's interest in the church since leaving them, 2: 17—3 end. (4) Exhortation for the future, 4: 1—5: 11. Concluding exhortations and commands, 5: 12-28.

(3) **Second Thessalonians.** This letter was written from Corinth and seems to be in the same year as First Thessalonians, probably, A.D. 53. It is the shortest of all the letters that Paul wrote to a church and has none

of the salutations found in most of the others. Its main purpose is to urge them to be patient in waiting for the Lord. They seem to have misunderstood his first letter especially in regard to his teaching about the second coming of Christ and as a result certain erroneous notions had grown up. Some of the people had ceased to work and to take care of their ordinary affairs. Thinking that Jesus was to come at once they felt no urge to make the ordinary preparations for their earthly necessities. Paul wants to correct this wrong opinion and to give them instructions concerning the proper conduct and view. It has in it a good word concerning industry and labor and a word of faith looking to the coming of Christ. The outline of the book may be put down under four points. (1) His thanksgiving and prayer for them in view of the second coming of Christ, Ch. 1. (2) Warning about the second coming, 2: 1-12. (3) Their escape at his coming, 2: 13—end. (4) Practical matters, Ch. 3.

(4) **Galatians.** As a background for the study of this book there is needed a suitable amount of information concerning the country and people. The term "Galatia" is probably used here with reference to the territory occupied by the Celtic tribes rather than a political division under Rome. That would cover a large portion of Lycaonia, Isauria, Phrygia, and Pisidia. These people were descendants of the Gauls who in the Fourth Century B.C. had sacked Rome and northern Greece. A mixed population formed out of Greek, Roman and Jewish people dominated by the Gauls were known as the Galatians. They were quick tempered and impulsive and very fickle. They quickly received impressions and as quickly gave them up.

We do not know just how the churches of Galatia were established. The great highway passing from east to west ran through this region and some of those who were present at Pentecost on their return may have sown the seeds of the gospel. Paul, while at Tarsus and Cilicia, may have preached in some of this territory. He certainly passed this way on the second missionary journey and seems to have been stricken with some sickness that made it necessary for him to remain with them. This furnished his opportunity to preach to them and his work was most successful. He visited some of them

again on his third missionary journey and left the churches in good condition.

The letter was occasioned by the entrance among them of Judaizing teachers who claimed that Christians were obligated to keep the Jewish law. While admitting that Jesus was the Messiah they taught that he saved only those who kept the law and, in order to gain their point and turn the Galatians away from their belief of the sufficiency of Christ apart from the law, they attacked Paul claiming that he was not an apostle and therefore not authoritative as a teacher. They even suggested that he had learned what he knew from others and that he, therefore, could not be considered as a pillar of the church as was each Peter, James and John.

The purpose of the Epistle was to overcome these errors and to return the Galatians to their former views received in the message of salvation which he had preached to them. In order to do this it was necessary for him to establish and confirm his Apostolic authority. He also sought to show the practical value and application of his teachings as it affected life and conduct. He gave us a great inspired classic on justification by faith and forever settled the question of Christ's sufficiency to save apart from the Jewish law.

The outline of the book is easily found. It has (1) Introduction, vs. 1-10. (2) His doctrine is independent of man, 1: 11—end. (3) It is the gospel of an apostle, Ch. 2. (4) It is proven by their own experiences, 3: 1-5. (5) It is proven by the example of Abraham, 3: 6-9. (6) It is proven by Scriptural teaching, 3: 10-12. (7) It is provided for by the work of Christ, 3: 13, 14. (8) Its spiritual results demonstrated it, 3: 15; 4: 20. (9) The experience of Sarah and Hagar illustrated, 4: 21—end. (10) Exhortation to hold their liberty, but not abuse it, 5: 1; 6: 10. (11) Conclusion, 6: 1—end.

335. **Third Tour** (Acts 18: 23—21: 26). How long Paul remained at Antioch at the close of the second journey, we do not know. But when he had finished his visit he bade farewell to the great missionary Church, and set out to revisit some of the places formerly touched, and to cultivate new fields.

1. **Work at Ephesus.** Paul had promised to return to Ephesus. He went overland, passed through Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening the Churches in the cities where he had formerly visited, and hastening on to Ephesus. This city was the center of interest on the third tour. From it all Asia Minor was influenced, and many Churches sprang up. (1) Preparation for his coming. On the return from the second tour he had left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus. Later, Apollos, an eloquent Jew, came there and taught. After being taught more fully the way of the Lord, he went to Corinth and carried on the work which had begun there. (2) Paul's work at Ephesus. He spent three months among the Jews, teaching in their synagogues, and then, because of opposition, he separated from them and formed the Christians into a separate community. After this, he taught over two years in the school of Tyrannus and reached Greeks and Jews from all parts of the province of Asia. During this time he also performed many miracles, some of which certain exorcists tried to imitate and failed. The success of this work is emphasized by two considerations. First, the burning of the books of the Jewish exorcists. The Word of God had become so powerful that these men were convinced and, in the presence of all the people, burned their books, valued at over $31,000.00; second, the checking of the worship of Diana. This was indicated in the decrease in the sale of images of Diana, which caused the manufacturers of these images to raise a mob against Paul. During this long stay he probably visited Corinth (2 Cor. 12: 14; 13: 1). He also wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16: 5-9; Acts 19: 20-21; 20: 1). He wrote them another letter (1 Cor. 5: 9) and they had written him one (1 Cor. 7: 1), neither of which is preserved to us.

2. **In Macedonia and Greece and the Collections for Poor Saints.** After the tumult in Ephesus, Paul departed into Macedonia. He went to Troas where he preached successfully (2 Cor. 2: 12); and then, again crossed the Aegean Sea into Macedonia, where he seems to have made a tour of the principal cities, finally coming to Corinth. Second Corinthians was written at some point

on this journey, probably from Philippi (2 Cor. 1: 8-10; 2: 12-13; Acts 20: 2). He remained three months at Corinth, during which time he wrote the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 15: 25-26; Acts 20: 3-4; 24: 17), and probably sent it by Phoebe (Rom. 16: 1). During this journey Paul was gathering money from the Gentile Christians for the poor Jewish brethren at Jerusalem. This collection was taken in Galatia, Macedonia and Achaia (1 Cor. 16: 1-3; Gal. 2: 10; Rom. 15: 25-26; Acts 24: 17; 2 Cor. Chaps. 8-9). Besides appeals in person and in letters, Titus and others were employed to collect and forward these funds (2 Cor. 8: 6, 23; 1 Cor. 16: 3). These gifts would show the good will of the Gentiles, and soften the bitter feeling of Jewish Christians toward uncircumcised brethren.

3. **Return to Jerusalem.** Paul had planned to sail from Corinth directly to Syria, but, upon a plot of the Jews to kill him, changed his plans and returned through Macedonia to Jerusalem. A splendid company of friends, both old and new, among whom was Luke (see "us" and "we"), joined him in Macedonia (Acts 20: 4-6). Several things made this trip notable. (1) The seven days' stay at Troas. This visit was notable for an all-night service, and the bringing to life of Eutychus on the last night of his visit. (2) Farewell conference at Miletus with the elders of Ephesus. Because of his rush to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, he passed by Ephesus. But from Miletus he sent for the elders of the church in that city and delivered to them a farewell address, in which he reviewed his work among them and gave them instruction and warnings. (3) A week's stay at Tyre, where he was urged not to go to Jerusalem. (4) Many days spent at Caesarea. Here we again meet Philip (Acts 8: 40), who now has four daughters that were inspired Christian teachers. While at Caesarea, Agabus, who formerly, while at Antioch, had prophesied the drouth at Jerusalem, predicted that the Jews at Jerusalem would bind Paul and deliver him to the Gentiles. (5) His reception in Jerusalem. He comes with the alms of the Gentile Christians, and with a wonderful story of the grace of God upon him and the lands where he had labored. The leaders re-

ceived him gladly, but he could not allay the prejudice of unbelieving Jews, and was soon in the hands of an angry mob.

336. **Epistles of the Tour.** This journey was also marked by the writing of some of Paul's most notable epistles. (1) First Corinthians, which he wrote while at Ephesus just before leaving for Macedonia. (2) Second Corinthians. When he came into Macedonia he met Titus with tidings from Corinth, and wrote them this second letter, probably from Philippi. (3) Romans. Leaving Macedonia Paul went into Greece and spent three months at Corinth, and wrote this book while staying in the house of Gaius (Rom. 16: 23; 1 Cor. 1: 14). The books should be read.

(1) **First Corinthians.** Three or four matters are of importance here. (1) The city of Corinth was the chief city of Greece at that time. It encouraged the arts and everything possible was done to beautify it. It soon came to be one of the richest cities of the world. It was also very wicked. It was crowded with people from all over the world. Sailors, adventurers, merchants and refugees in great numbers flocked there bringing with them every form of human degradation. They even prostituted philosophy and religion to low and lustful uses. (2) The church. On Paul's second missionary journey he spent a year and a half at Corinth during which time many were saved and the church established. It was a church surrounded by the basest of heathen customs and practices. They had to meet every form of evil philosophical question. They had to blaze the way and show how Christianity would fare in times of severe testings. Apollos preached there and aided the church between Paul's visits on the Second and Third journeys. There were many divisions in the church. (3) Occasion and purpose of the Epistle. Paul heard unfavourable reports from the church and wrote them a letter which has been lost (5: 9). In the meantime through certain friends including some from the household of Chloe (1: 11; 16: 17) he heard of their divisions and of the evil conduct of certain of their members. They also wrote him a letter asking his advice about the problems of every day life such as factions or divisions, immorality as in the case of the incestuous person, Chris-

tians going to law with each other and spiritual gifts such as speaking with tongues.

The following outline will prove helpful in reading the book: (1) Introduction, 1: 1-9. (2) Concerning Christ as the center of Christianity, 1: 10 end. (3) Concerning spiritual mindedness, 2: 1—3: 4. (4) Concerning the right view of preachers, 3: 5—4 end. The last three would correct divisions. (5) Concerning the incestuous person, Ch. 5. (6) Concerning law-suits, 6: 1-11. (7) Concerning sins of the body, 6: 12 end. (8) Concerning marriage and celibacy, Ch. 7. (9) Concerning things offered to idols, 8: 1—11: 1. (10) Concerning head-dress, 11: 2-16. (11) Concerning the Lord's Supper, 11: 17 end. (12) Concerning spiritual gifts, Chs. 12-14. (13) The Resurrection, Ch. 15. (14) Concerning collection for the saints, 16: 1-4. (15) Personal matters and conclusions, 16: 5 end.

(2) **Second Corinthians.** The two letters to the Corinthians that have come down to us seem to be only a part of a series of letters that passed between Paul and this church. From hints here and there it is clear that Paul suffered much anxiety and grief because of them. On his third missionary journey he hoped for news from Corinth while he was at Troas. In this he was disappointed but in Macedonia he met Titus and wrote this letter in response to the message brought by him. In it he expresses joy because they seem to have given heed to his advice. He, nevertheless, expresses solicitude for them and warns them against error. He instructs them as to their duties and defends himself against the attacks of his enemies.

The book is filled with such emotions as joy, grief and indignation. The first section has as its subject tribulation and consolation in tribulation. Everywhere in it there runs an undercurrent of apology. Section two is filled with sorrowful emotion. Section three bristles with a deep feeling of indignation. It is very personal and from it we learn more of his life and character than from any other source. It is less systematic than any other of Paul's letters and therefore very difficult of analysis. But the following outline will guide the reader of the book. (1) Introduction, 1: 1-7. (2) Paul's interest in the Corinthian church, 1: 8—2: 11. (3) His

service to both God and men, 2: 12 end. (4) His appointment by the Holy Spirit, Ch. 3. (5) His power from God, Ch. 4. (6) His hope of future blessedness, 5: 1-19. (7) His exhortation and appeal to the church, 5: 20—7: 4. (8) His joy at their reception of the word, 7: 5—end. (9) His appeal for liberality, 8: 1-15. (10) Sending Titus and two other brethren, 8: 16—9: 5. Blessedness of liberality 6—end. (11) His apostolic authority vindicated, 10: 1—12: 13. (12) Warning about the use of his apostolic authority and conclusion, 12: 14—13—end.

(3) **Romans.** This is perhaps the greatest book written by Paul. He shows how by faith we have imparted to us the righteousness of God as our justification. At the time of the writing Paul had never been to Rome but was planning to go. He did, however, have many intimate friends and acquaintances there and mentions a number of them in chapter 16, among them Aquila and Priscilla. The church there seems to have been in a very prosperous condition. In its membership were both Jews and Gentiles (1: 6-13; 7: 1), though it was considered a Gentile church (1: 5-7, 13-15). Paul had longed to go to Rome (Acts 19: 21) and hoped to go soon (Rom. 15: 24-33) and probably wanted them to know what he taught before he arrived. He had but recently written Galatians and may have desired to further elaborate the teaching and especially to put more emphasis on the divine side of the doctrine as he did in this book. Then, too, Phoebe a Christian woman and friend of Paul was leaving Corinth for Rome and could carry his letter as well as be introduced by him (Rom. 16: 1-2). He needed also to correct some errors of doctrine and practice. They had thought that he taught that the greater the sin the greater the glory of God (3: 8) and that we should sin more in order to get more grace (6: 1), thereby making his doctrine of justification by faith an excuse for immoral conduct. Certain Jews refused to recognize Gentile Christians as their equals in Christ's Kingdom and certain Gentile brethren looked with contempt upon their narrow, prejudiced and bigoted Jewish brethren (14: 3). This letter aims to win the Jews to Christian truth and the Gentiles to Christian love. Here is an outline of the book. (1) Introduction, 1: 1-17.

(2) All men need righteousness, 1: 18—3: 20. (3) All men may have righteousness through faith in Christ (Justification), 3: 21—4 end. (4) All who are thus justified are guaranteed final glorification, Chs. 5-8. (a) By their new relation to God, Ch. 5. (b) By the new realm of grace he has entered where there is no death, Ch. 6. (c) By his new nature which will win over the old, Ch. 7. (d) By his new possession—the Holy Spirit, 8: 1-27. (e) By God's eternal purpose, 8: 28-39. (5) The justice of the Jews' rejection, 9: 1-29. (6) The cause of their rejection, 9: 30—10 end. (7) The limitations of their rejection, Ch. 11. (8) The Christian's duty to God and himself, Ch. 12. (9) His duty to state authorities and society, 12: 1-10. (10) His duty of watchfulness, 13: 11-14. (11) Duty to help the weak, 14: 1—15: 13. (12) Conclusion, 15: 14—16 end.

337. **Paul's Four Years' Imprisonment,** A.D. 58-63 (Acts 21: 27—28: 31). During the next four years our great missionary is in bonds.

1. **At Jerusalem** (21: 27—23: 30). Although Paul was received graciously by the brethren, and although he took a certain precaution that he might not offend the many thousands of Jews that were in Jerusalem at the feast, some Asiatic Jews saw him and raised a tumult. (1) They began to beat him and would, no doubt, have killed him, if he had not been rescued by a band of Roman soldiers. (2) When, as a prisoner, he was being borne to the Tower of Antonia, he obtained permission to speak to the angry crowd of fanatic Jews. He told the story of his life and conversion. He said nothing of their indignities upon him, but extolled Christ and urged them to believe on him. Their clamor made it necessary for the officers to carry him into the tower. (3) When he was taken into the castle he was ordered scourged. He saved himself from this by claiming his rights as a Roman citizen. (4) He was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin. When he saw there was no hope of justice he threw the council into confusion by declaring that he was a Pharisee and that he was being tried for his hope of resurrection so dear to Pharisees. This divided the council and they came near killing him in their contentions. After this

he was put into prison. (5) God's comfort and assurance to Paul (23: 11). Worn out with the tumults and mobs of two days, he rested in prison. The Lord that night assured him that he should yet realize his great desire to preach at Rome. (6) The plot of Jewish fanatics. Paul's nephew learned of this plot to kill him and made it known, and Paul was then sent under heavy guard to Caesarea.

2. **At Caesarea** (23: 31—26: 32). When Paul reached Caesarea he was under Roman jurisdiction and remained there as a prisoner for two years. He was not kept in close confinement and was allowed to see his friends (24: 23). Luke puts his emphasis on Paul's defense of his faith. The most important incidents are as follows: (1) His defense before Felix. Paul's enemies were determined, and after five days the high priests and an orator named Tertullus went down to Caesarea to secure Paul's sentence from the governor. In his reply to their charges he denied, with manly dignity, that he was guilty of sedition, but owned himself a believer in the resurrection. The decision was postponed and Paul granted certain liberties. (2) His second hearing before Felix. This was apparently in private. To satisfy the curiosity of his wife, Drusilla, Felix summoned Paul to preach before them. Felix was a notoriously unjust and bloody ruler, and his wife had quit her husband to marry him. Instead of a defense of himself Paul turned his batteries upon their guilty consciences and made them tremble. But Felix put him off and showed his character by sending for him several times, not to hear the gospel, but in the hope of securing a bribe. (3) His trial before Festus. As soon as Festus came into office, the Jews pressed their case against Paul. When Festus showed a leaning toward the Jews and proposed to send him to Jerusalem, he claimed his right as a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar. This claim could not be denied and hence he was soon to be carried away from these bitter enemies. (4) His defense before Agrippa II. The embarrassment of Festus, in having to send Paul to Rome with no real charge against him, led to bringing him before Agrippa. Paul's address is tremendous, and while find-

ing nothing bad in him, they could not set aside his appeal and hence, planned to send him to Caesar.

3. **On the Way to Rome** (Acts 27: 1—28: 15). Paul now takes up his long journey to Rome—not a free man as he had expected, but as a prisoner. He was in charge of the centurion, Julius, and was accompanied by two dear friends, Luke and Aristarchus. Other prisoners were also in the company. On the trip he traveled on three ships, one of which was destroyed and cast away. The section falls into four parts. (1) From Caesarea to Myra, a city of Lycia. Their ship touched at Sidon where Paul was allowed to visit his friends and then, passing to the east and north of Cyprus, came to Myra. (2) From Myra to Melita—the great storm. This portion of the journey was full of difficulties. From Myra to Cnidus their progress against baffling winds was slow. They stopped at Fair Havens (on the south of Crete) where, on account of the lateness of the season, Paul advised them to postpone the voyage, and warned them of the danger to the ship, should they try to go farther. Disregarding this advice, they tried to reach Phenice on the same island where they would have a better place to winter. For fourteen days they were driven before a fierce storm, and all lost hope, but Paul, to whom the angel of God came with a message of assurance. He comforted all his fellow-passengers, of whom there were two hundred and seventy-five. (3) The winter at Melita (modern Malta). They were driven upon the shelving beach of Melita, an island directly south of Sicily, and remained there three months. When they swam ashore, the natives treated them most kindly, building a fire for them. Paul at once began a ministry of usefulness and healing. He gained their confidence by not being harmed when bitten by a snake. Then he healed the father of Publius, the chief man of the island, of a fever, and performed many other miracles of healing. The story suggests that, in whatever place Paul came, he began at once to exercise his Christian gifts. In appreciation of his services the islanders loaded them with gifts when they departed. (4) The journey completed. Embarking in a grain ship from Alexandria,

they stopped at Syracuse in Sicily for three days, then touched Rhegium, and finally landed at Puteoli, eight miles south of Naples and the principal harbor south of Rome in Paul's day. Here they found Christian brethren and remained seven days. From here they went to Rome, traveling over the "Queen of Roads," the Appian Way. The Roman Christians heard of Paul's coming and came out to meet him at Apii Forum, forty-three miles, and at Three Taverns, thirty-three miles from the city. This greatly cheered Paul and, though a prisoner, he had a sort of triumphal procession into Rome.

4. **At Rome.** (1) His interview with the Jews. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles, but always spoke first to the Jews. After three days, therefore, he called together the leading Jews and explained to them why he had been sent to Rome, and he declared to them his faith in Jesus as the Messiah. At another meeting he spoke to them from morning till night, explaining to them the principles of the Kingdom of God. (2) His testimony to the Gentiles. Not receiving sufficient response from the Jews, he turned to the Gentiles. For two years he remained a prisoner, chained day and night to a soldier. But he was allowed to live in his own hired house, and to receive whoever would come to him, and had entire freedom of speech. His ardor for souls was not quenched, and the epistles of this period abound in references to the fruits of his labor. (3) His later history. It is commonly thought that Paul was released and made other missionary trips. He seems to have gone first to the east, visiting Ephesus, Colossae and other places; then westward to Spain; then again went east to Asia Minor. On this theory which has much in its support, he was again arrested and endured a terrible imprisonment in a common criminal dungeon (2 Tim. 2: 9). Luke's story in Acts suddenly breaks off without giving details of how the great missionary died, but common tradition has it that he was put to death at Rome.

338. **Paul's Last Eight Addresses.** The last addresses of the great apostle are a striking feature of the records of this period. In the light of his long and toilsome mis-

sionary labors, and in view of his imprisonment and imminent danger of death, these speeches show his great faith and courage, and are given here for study. (1) His speech before the Jewish mob in the Temple (Acts 22: 1-29), in which he tells the story of his conversion. (2) His speech before the Jewish council (Acts 22: 30—23: 10), in which he caused confusion by raising the question of the resurrection. (3) His speech before Felix (Acts 24: 10-22), in which he denies the accusation of the Jews and confesses to being a Christian and to believing in the resurrection. (4) His speech before Felix and his wife Drusilla (Acts 24: 24-27), in which he appealed to their hearts concerning righteousness, temperance and judgment. (5) His speech before Festus (Acts 25: 7-11), in which he appeals to Caesar. (6) His speech before Festus and King Agrippa II (Acts Chap. 26), in which he again relates his experience in conversion and shows that Jesus is the Christ. (7) His speech to his fellow passengers on the voyage to Rome (Acts 27: 21-34), in which he comforted and encouraged them. (8) His speech to the Jews at Rome (Acts 28: 17-31).

339. **Paul's Companions.** One of the most impressive traits in Paul's character was the way he attracted others to himself and to a life of self-denying toil for the Saviour. He was particularly blessed in winning the confidence and loving co-operation of young men. He was also able to use big men and have their loving assistance. From time to time, he left them at given places, and sent them ahead to do certain types of work. The following is a list of names that were at one time or another with Paul in his work. The student should look up each to find out where and in what way each had relation to Paul. Barnabas, John Mark, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Aquila and Priscilla, Titus, Erastus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Quartus, Tertius, Lucius, Jason, Sopater, Phoebe, Secundus, Tychieus, Trophinus, Epaphras, Justus, Onesimus, Onesiphorus, Apollos, Stephanas, Epaphroditus. He was intimate with several others.

340. **Epistles of the Period.** More epistles belong to this period than to any other. They belong to two groups.

1. **Those Written by Paul.** These are, (1) Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon. These were all written from Rome during the first imprisonment, during the years 62 and 63 A.D. (2) First Timothy and Titus. These were probably written from Macedonia about A.D. 64-66. This is on the theory that Paul was released from imprisonment at Rome and made another preaching tour. (3) Second Timothy. Written from Rome just before his death, about 68 A.D. This would have been a second imprisonment, which was commonly reported by all early tradition. (4) Hebrews.

(1) **Ephesians.** Next to Rome Ephesus was the most important city visited by Paul. It was the capital of proconsular Asia and was a great religious, commercial and political center. It had a great theater that seated 50,000 and the great temple of Diana made of shining marble which required 220 years in building. It was counted one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and made Ephesus the center of Diana worship (Acts 19: 23-41). It was the Christian center for all the work of Asia and from it went out the influences by which all the seven churches, of Asia, to which the letters in Revelation were addressed, were established.

Paul visited here on the return from the second missionary journey (Acts 18: 18-21), and spent about three years there on the third journey (Acts 20: 31). While there he almost destroyed Diana worship and caused such opposition that he left and went into Macedonia (Acts 20: 1). On his return from this trip he stopped at Miletus thirty miles away and sent for the elders at Ephesus and delivered to them a farewell address (Acts 20: 16-38).

The contents of the Epistle are very similar to those of Colossians. It discusses church-hood or the church as the body of Christ while Colossians discusses Christ-hood or Christ the head of the church. Here Paul is in a quiet meditative mood while in Colossians he is in the heated arena of controversy attacking false teaching. It is said to contain the profoundest truth revealed to men. Its thought transcends all local and changing questions and points to a triumphant and universal church of the future. It seems to have been a sort of circular letter to be sent to several churches. A simple

outline is sufficient. (1) The spiritual blessings of the church, 1: 1-14. (2) Paul's prayer for the readers, 1: 15-23. (3) The great work done for them, Ch. 2. (4) Paul's mission and prayer for them, Ch. 3. (5) Duty of church members to other members and outsiders, 4: 1—5: 21. (6) Duties of church members in home relations, 5: 22—6: 9. (7) Duties of church members to the organized efforts of the church, 6: 10-20. (8) Conclusion, 6: 21 end.

(2) **Philippians.** The city of Philippi was on the great highway through which all trade and traders eastward and westward passed. It was well watered, surrounded by a very fertile territory and near some very rich gold mines. Here Paul, while on the second mission journey, established the first church of Europe. The story of his work here includes the conversion and baptism of Lydia, casting out of an evil spirit of divination, the imprisonment of Paul and Silas, the earthquake and the conversion and baptism of the jailor (Acts Ch. 16). He spent the Passover there (Acts 6: 20) and received messages from them (Phil. 4: 16). They also sent him assistance (Phil. 4: 18) and he wrote them this letter.

The letter is a free and spontaneous expression of love and gratitude. He writes like a tender and warm hearted friend and brother. He is informal and seems to make no effort at a logical or doctrinal argument and yet he does present the essential truths of the Gospel but in a most friendly and even incidental way. He rejoices in the aid they had sent him by Epaphroditus and sends this letter of thanks by him as he returns from Rome to Philippi (4: 18). It should be read as a spiritual tonic especially its tender warnings and entreaties and exhortations. The following outline will guide the reader. (1) Introduction, 1: 1-11. (2) Paul's present situation and feeling, 1: 12-26. (3) Some exhortations, 1: 27—2: 18. (4) He plans to communicate with them, 2: 19 end. (5) Warnings against Judaizers, 3: 1-16. (6) Warnings against false professors, 3: 17 end. (7) Final exhortations, 4: 1-9. (8) Gratitude for their gifts, 4: 10-19. (9) Conclusion, 4: 20 end.

(3) **Colossians.** In Paul's time the city of Colossae was of small importance. It was on the great highway

from Ephesus to the Euphrates valley about 100 miles east of Ephesus. The church there was founded by Epaphras working on behalf of Paul or under his direction (1: 6-7; 4: 12-13), but Paul had never visited there (1: 7; 2: 1). He had, however, kept up with the affairs of the church and approved its discipline and work (1: 3, 4-7, 9, 23; 2: 1, 5-7; 4: 13-18). They loved him (1: 8).

Paul was led to write this letter to correct a false teaching that was troubling the church. Gnostic teachers who believed that all matter is evil were disturbing their faith. They thought men's bodies being matter, were evil; that a good and holy God did not create them. This view led them to reject the incarnation of God, in the flesh because they thought he would not touch matter as he would have to do if he entered a human body. Several other errors grew out of this. Thinking that the body is evil they believed one could indulge in all its evil passions at pleasure, with no sense of guilt (3: 5-8). On the other hand some thought that by ascetic practices we might punish the body and make it good (2: 20-23). Others thought they had found the secret of how to be saved, and that all who would know this secret must be initiated into this group (2: 2, 3, 8). Still another group formulated a series of intermediary beings called Aeons or angels and felt that they would be saved by worshiping these angels (2: 18). In all this they limited the power of Christ as a sufficient Savior (2: 9-10). There are four aspects of these false theories; Philosophic, 2: 3, 4, 8; Ritualistic or Judaistic, 2: 11, 14, 17; Visionary or angel worship, 1: 16; 2: 10, 15, 18; Ascetic practices, 2: 20-23. They manifest ceremonialism or ritualism, seen in the Catholics; Speculation, seen in Christian Science; Low moral standards seen in modern holiness movements. The epistle is an attack on these false theories and is polemic in spirit. It exalts Christ and shows that in Christ we have everything—that he is all and in all, and possesses the fulness of the Godhead. The outline is: (1) Introduction, 1: 1-14. (2) Christ in relation to creation and the church, 1: 15 end. (3) Polemic against false teachings, Ch. 2. (4) Exhortation to an exalted Christian life, 3: 1-14. (5) Exhortation to make Christ sovereign over the whole life, 3: 15-17. (6) The discharge of relative duties, 3: 18—4: 1.

(7) Duty of prayer, 4: 2-6. (8) Personal section, 4: 7 end.

(4) **Philemon.** This is a very simple personal letter. Onesimus, a slave of Philemon who lived at Colossae, probably a member of the church there, robbed his master (18), fled to Rome and was converted under Paul's preaching (10). The letter tells Philemon of the conversion of Onesimus and makes a plea for him to be received back as a brother. Paul lays aside his apostolic authority and writes as a friend using great courtesy. The letter indicates the great power of the Gospel to transform a slave and to soften the harsh relations between different classes. The chapter falls into three divisions. (1) Introduction, 1-7. (2) The purpose of the letter—an appeal to Philemon, 8-21. (3) Closing matters, 22 end.

(5) **Titus.** Titus was a very capable and energetic missionary whom Paul left in Crete to finish the work he had begun there. He was a Gentile and at an earlier time was carried to Jerusalem where the Jewish counsel, by refusing to require him to be circumcised, definitely decided that the Gospel should be freely offered to the Gentiles, and that one did not have to become a Jew to be a Christian (Gal. 2: 1-5; 2 Cor. 2: 12-13; 7: 2-16; Titus 1: 5; 3: 12).

The book discusses the qualifications of the presbyters to be selected; the method of dealing with false teachings, and the duties of the different classes in the church. He wrote it to counsel him about the work he had left him to do (1: 5) and exhorts him to be an example of good work. The outline is: (1) Greeting, 1: 1-4. (2) Qualifications of bishops or pastors, 1: 5-9. (3) Reasons for the need of such officers, 1: 10 end. (4) Proper conduct of different classes and its basis, Ch. 2. (5) Proper conduct in the different relations, 3: 1-11. (6) Conclusion, 3: 12 end.

(6) **First Timothy.** Timothy is one of the most interesting of Paul's companions. He was of good parentage, his father a Greek, his mother and grandmother devout Jews who taught him the Scriptures (2: 1-5; 3: 15). His home was Lystra where he may have been converted on the first missionary journey (Acts 14:

8-20). He was an evangelist and spent much time with Paul after the second missionary journey (Acts 16: 1; 1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6). Paul esteemed him very highly (Acts 17: 14; 18: 5; 20: 4; Rom. 16: 21; 1 Cor. 4: 17; 16: 10) and associated with him in writing several letters (2 Cor. 1: 1; Phil. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1). He wanted Timothy with him when he died (2 Tim. 4: 9, 13, 21).

This letter was written while Timothy was pastor at Ephesus between A.D. 64 and 66 to instruct him in pastoral duties, particularly as to his relation to the church and the world. It indicates the type of men who should be given office in the church, and warns Timothy against legalistic tendencies and unwise speculations (1: 3-11; 4: 1-5; 6: 20-21) and urges him to live a spotless life, (4: 12; 5: 21-22; 6: 11-16). The following is a simple outline: (1) True teaching of the gospel, Ch. 1. (2) Public worship, Ch. 2. (3) The church officers, Ch. 3. (4) Pastoral duties, 4: 1—6: 2. (5) Final warnings and exhortations, 6: 3 end.

(7) **Second Timothy.** This letter is a sort of last will and testament, written just before Paul's martyrdom about 67 A.D. It tells how pitiful was his plight just before death. All but Luke had deserted him. He was in a cold damp dungeon in need of his cloak for covering (4: 13) and urged Timothy to come before winter (4: 21). It is very personal but gives some instructions to Timothy; urges him to be courageous (1: 6-7; 2: 4-6) and warns him of future evil times (3: 1-7). The outline is: (1) Introduction, 1: 1-5. (2) Exhortation to steadfastness, 1: 6 end. (3) Exhortation to endurance of suffering, 2: 1-13. (4) Exhortation to faithfulness as a pastor, 2: 14-26 end. (5) Warnings concerning future perilous times, 3: 1-13. (6) Warnings concerning his duties in such a time, 3: 14—4: 5. (7) Paul's view of death and conclusion, 4: 6-22 end.

(8) **Hebrews.** No one can know of a certainty who wrote this book since there is no statement about it. The writer inclines to the Pauline authorship, but many ripe scholars have different views and none of us must be dogmatic. Certainly the weight of tradition is on the side of Paul, also its Christology is like that of Paul during this period. In like manner it is difficult to deter-

mine who were addressed, whether a special church or those in a particular locality. It was written before A.D. 70 since the Temple and its worship were still in force.

It is clear from the book that those addressed had endured severe persecution and loss of property, and had shown sympathy with other Christians (6: 10; 10: 32-34). They had been Christians a long time and knew the writer and Timothy (13: 18-19; 13: 23). They were in danger of going back to Judaism. There had arisen doubt about Christ and His claims (3: 12). Then, too, the Jews had branded them as traitors and taunted them for leaving the law which had been given them by Moses, prophets and angels and for turning away from the sanctuary ministered to by the priests of God. All this elaborate worship compared with the simple worship of Christians added to their persecutions made them wonder if they had made a bad trade in becoming Christians.

The purpose of the letter was to establish them in the faith and prevent a return to Judaism and also to comfort them in their persecution. To accomplish this purpose he set up a series of comparisons by which he showed the superiority of Christianity over Judaism. In this way he shows that the priest, the sacrifice, the covenant and the tabernacle in the Christian faith are all superior to those of Judaism. It is all very much like a sermon, having interwoven all along some solemn warnings and earnest exhortations. The trend of discussion is indicated by the frequent use of such terms as "better" and "more excellent." His outline is rather simple. (1) Christ's superiority to prophets and angels, Chs. 1-2. (2) Christ's superiority to Moses including Joshua, Chs. 3-6. (3) Christ our priest is superior to the priests of Judaism, 7: 1—8: 6. (4) Our Christian covenant is superior to that of Judaism, 8: 7 end. (5) Christ the Christian sacrifice is superior to the Jewish sacrifice, Ch. 9. (6) The Christian Tabernacle is superior to that of the Jews, 10: 1-18. (7) Christianity furnishes us a better approach to God, 10: 19 end. (8) Christianity provides a better ground of faith, 11: 1—12: 17. (9) Christians have a better attainment—Mount Zion instead of Mount Sinai, 12: 18 end. (10) Practical conclusion, Ch. 13.

2. **Those Written by Others.** There are four of these. (1) Epistle of James. It was probably written about A.D. 50, but many think it was written as late as A.D. 62. Because of this uncertainty, it is put down here for consideration, along with so many others. (2) First Epistle of Peter, written about A.D. 66. (3) Second Epistle of Peter, written about A.D. 67, and certainly before the fall of Jerusalem A.D. 70. (4) Epistle of Jude, written about A.D. 66.

(1) **James.** The author of this book is supposed to be the Lord's brother (Matt. 13: 55) who did not believe on Jesus until after the resurrection (John 7: 2-9; 3: 21, 31; Acts 1: 13-14). He occupied an important place as pastor at Jerusalem and made an important address at the council of Apostles (Acts 15: 13-21). He is mentioned in Acts 12: 17; Gal. 1: 19; 2: 9-12, and Josephus says he was stoned to death.

The epistle was one of the earliest of the New Testament, probably written about A.D. 50. It was written to Christian Jews who had been scattered abroad (1: 1; 2: 1). Among them were some rich and some poor (2: 1-10). They were proud and greedy and lustful and neglecting their duty (4: 1-12; 1: 22-27). The book does not have the word Gospel, does not allude to the work of redemption, the incarnation, the resurrection or the ascension and only mentions Christ's name twice. It states the Christian faith in terms of moral excellence and it is stern, sincere, and eloquent, and characterized by abruptness. It seems to have no general subject but through it all the idea of "Faith without works is dead" is found. It is closely related to the wisdom books of the Old Testament. The outline has nine points: (1) Proper attitude toward trials, 1: 1-18. (2) Proper attitude toward the word of God, 1: 19-27 end. (3) Warning against respect of persons, 2: 1-13. (4) Warning against barren professions of faith, 2: 14-26. (5) Warning against the dangers of the tongue, 3: 1-12. (6) Warning against false wisdom, 3: 13-18. (7) Warning against quarrels, greed and pride, 4: 1-12. (8) Various denunciations, 4: 13—5: 6. (9) Various exhortations, 5: 7-20.

(2) **First Peter.** The Apostle Peter who wrote this book was led to Christ by his brother Andrew and be-

came a leader both before and after Christ's death. He was energetic and impetuous and after Christ's ascension performed many miracles. He wrote this letter to Jewish Christians who were persecuted sojourners of the dispersion (1: 1, 17; 2: 11; 3: 17; 4: 12-19). He tried to console them in their suffering and exhorted them to faithfulness. Along with those words of courage and consolation are found strong exhortations to holiness and purity of life. It was probably written between A.D. 64 and 68. Outline (1) Thanksgiving for the blessing of grace, 1: 1-12. (2) The right relation of the heart toward God and man, 1: 13—2: 10. (3) Right conduct in life relations, 2: 11—3: 12. (4) Right attitude toward suffering, 3: 13—4: 19 end. (5) Special exhortations and conclusion, Ch. 5.

(3) **Second Peter.** This letter is written to warn them against the libertines and mockers whose false teaching was harming the church. He exhorts them to Christian growth. He explains to them that they have a great inheritance which should lead them to be holy; that purity of soul will lead them to love the brethren; that sacrifice should be a natural expression of praise. It is very different from First Peter. It manifests a spirit of anxiety, severity, and denunciation while in First Peter he is mild, sweet and fatherly. It connects the second coming of Jesus with the punishment of the wicked while First Peter connects it with the glory of the saints. It has for its keynote knowledge while that of First Peter is hope. Outline: (1) Introduction and exhortation to growth, 1: 1-11. (2) Reasons for the exhortations, 1: 12 end. (3) The false teachers, their followers and punishment, Ch. 2. (4) Second coming of Christ and conclusion, Ch. 3.

(4) **Jude.** Jude is the brother of the Lord, the brother of James who wrote the epistle of that name. He wrote to offset the doctrines of some false teachers who were teaching heresies in the congregation. The epistle exposes their errors and exhorts the readers to contend for the faith and live worthy lives. It is in many points similar to Second Peter. Analysis: (1) Introduction, 1-4. (2) Fate of the wicked disturbers, 5-16. (3) How to contend for the faith, 17-23. (4) Conclusion, 24-25.

341. **Teachings of the Period.** (1) One man with proper consecration can be a blessing to all the world. (2) The same teaching sometimes wins one and repels another—find instances in this section. (3) The fact that one is divinely led does not guarantee that one may not be wrongly treated by men. (4) Persecution can not destroy one's happiness, if one is conscious of doing the will of God—Paul in prison. (5) Strategic centers are the most fruitful fields of missionary work—point out the centers here. (6) False religious beliefs are less tolerant than true ones—cite illustrations. (7) God may save a whole company for the sake of one man—give illustrations. (8) No matter what calamity comes to us we may in the midst of it be a source of blessing to others—find examples.

342. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) The countries visited by Paul. Draw maps and indicate Paul's journeys. (2) The history and importance of principal cities visited by Paul (make a list of them and consult the Bible dictionaries). (3) Paul's companions—from the Bible and Bible dictionaries study each. (4) The Apostle Paul—birth and childhood, education, conversion, etc. (5) Paul's persecutions—what and by whom, outcome of each. (6) Miraculous element seen in this section—list every miracle, give reference and discuss. (7) The value of his Roman citizenship to Paul—how he used it, and where. (8) Paul's Epistles—name them, tell in which period or journey they come, and something of the occasion, purpose and outlines of each. (9) A like study of the other Epistles of the period. (10) The time and extent of Paul's journeys. (11) The Church council at Jerusalem. (12) The Roman officers met in this narrative—kind of men, etc. (13) Paul's speeches given here—analyze and discuss each.

SECTION III. LATER APOSTOLIC HISTORY—(A.D. 70—100)

Epistles of John and Revelation.

343. **Period of History.** This period begins with the fall of the city of Jerusalem A.D. 70, and continues to the death of the Apostle John, the last surviving apostle,

about A.D. 100. As to general history, the period has in it little of interest or importance. At the end of the very creditable reign of Emperor Vespasian, who was on the throne of Rome when Jerusalem fell, Titus, called "The delight of the human race," reigned in his stead. During his reign there occurred that awful eruption of Vesuvius, which buried Pompeii. Titus was succeeded by Domitian, who was one of the greatest tyrants that ever ruled in any country. It was most probably through his reign that John was banished to the isle of Patmos. After Domitian, Nerva and Trajan reigned. The last of these showed great talent and brought back much of the early glory of the empire.

344. **Destruction of Jerusalem.** As indicated above, this period begins with the fall and destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus had predicted the terrible destruction of this beloved city. Many frightful massacres had occurred in Judea before the end of the last period, but it was not until A.D. 70, about two years after Paul's death, that Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. This marks the downfall of Judaism. After this the marks of separation between Christianity and the Jewish religion became more and more distinct, and since that time Judaism has never gained the ascendancy in any country. Never in history has there been greater suffering than was endured here, when the city of David was trodden down by the Gentiles, and the holy and beautiful house where the fathers worshiped was burned with fire.

345. **Later Life of John.** Long before Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, the Apostle John had dropped out of the history of Acts. He is last mentioned in connection with the work of John in Samaria (Acts 8: 14-25), and was present at the Jerusalem council (Acts Chap. 15; Gal. 2: 9). He does not figure largely in the work of evangelization, but his writings are the most important of any of the apostles, except Paul's. His later life was spent in Asia Minor, where he was probably attracted in an effort to save the Churches there from the ruin which false teachings threatened to bring upon them. It is affirmed on good authority that he resided for a long time at Ephesus, and from there rendered helpful services to all the Churches of Asia Minor. During his stay here, he

wrote his three Epistles and the Gospel of John. Because of his testimony to Jesus, emperor Domitian banished him to the isle of Patmos (Rev. 1: 9) where he wrote the book of Revelation. He seems to have lived until the end of the first century, and is said to have met death in a cauldron of boiling oil.

346. **Seven Churches of Asia.** The name of John is inseparably connected with the "seven Churches of Asia," to which the Lord commissioned him to write the short letters recorded in Revelation (Chaps. 1 and 2). Ephesus was the home of John while in Asia Minor; Smyrna lay forty miles to the north of Ephesus and is still a large city; Pergamus was about sixty miles north of Smyrna and was famous for its royal library of 200,000 volumes, and is now a village of only a few thousand inhabitants; Thyatira was in the northern part of Lydia, and now numbers six or seven thousand; Sardis was the capital of ancient Lydia, whose King Croesus was reputed to have had wealth valued at about six hundred million dollars; Philadelphia was the second city of importance in Lydia; Laodicea, the capital of greater Phrygia, was a city of great size and splendor. These churches were typical of the time—some good, some very bad, and others with some things good and some bad. Each city, should be studied in connection with the letter written to it.

347. **Other Apostles.** We have little definite information concerning the labors of the rest of the apostles. We can trace the career of Peter more completely than that of any other. His epistles give us many suggestions. James the brother of John had long ago been murdered (Acts 12: 1-2). The New Testament does not seem to give us anything further about the other apostles. Tradition connects each of the apostles with the evangelization of some particular country, or people, and also relates their martyrdom. But much of this tradition is unreliable, and we shall probably never know but little of the work and surroundings of their last days.

Here is a matter of profound significance. Why all this obscurity about the labors of even the greatest of the apostles? It is explained in the fact that, in the apostolic history, the emphasis and interest does not center

in men, but in the ever increasing influence of the work. Little concern is felt for the exploits of men, but supreme importance is attached to the victory won by Christianity itself. In gospel history the personal interest predominates because the chief interest rested on Christ. No obscurity is allowed concerning him. Every work or word is to call attention to him. No mystery surrounds his departure from earth as it does with reference to his apostles. Everything stands or falls with him, and we are given full benefit of the knowledge of his death and resurrection.

348. **Literature of the Period.** As has already been implied, this period produced but a scanty Christian literature. What we have of these years is divided into two classes. (1) Scripture books. These are the epistles of John, the Gospel of John, and the book of Revelation. The epistles were sent from Ephesus a while before his banishment, probably about A.D. 85 or 90. Revelation was written from his exile in Patmos, about 96 or 98 A.D. The Gospel of John may also have been written during this period, but it has already been studied in connection with the life of Christ. (2) Some early Christian writings, not included in the New Testament. These writings constitute what is called Patristic literature. Of this class of writings are the "Epistle of Clement of Rome," written to the Corinthians, about A.D. 96-98, and the "Epistle of Barnabas" and the "Teachings of the Twelve Apostles," probably written some time before A.D. 100. Here then is the change from canonical, or Biblical, to Patristic, or non-canonical literature.

(1) **First John.** Like the Gospel of John the author nowhere gives his name, but tradition has always attributed it to the Apostle John. His use of contrasts, parallelisms and repetitions and his small use of figures of speech as well as his use of symbols such as light and darkness make it seem to be from the same pen as the Gospel. It is very like a sermon having a fine tone of authority. He addressed people of different ages who were inclined to worldliness and in danger of looking too lightly on sin. To counteract their temptation to deny the deity of Christ he emphasized the atoning work of Christ. His chief purpose was to explain to them how

they might know that they had eternal life and thereby they would be full of joy, 1: 3-4; 5: 13. Outline: (1) Introduction, 1: 1-4. (2) Those that have eternal life will walk in the Light, 1: 5—2: 28. (3) Those who have eternal life will do righteousness, 2: 29—4: 6. (4) Those that have eternal life will live a life of love, 4: 7—5: 3. (5) Those that have eternal life will walk by faith, 5: 3-12. (6) Those who live that way will know they have eternal life and their prayers are answered, 5: 13-17. (7) Those who live that way know that God's people do not live in sin and their true relation to God and Christ, 5: 18-21.

(2) **Second John.** This is a brief personal letter written to a friend, sometime after the first epistle. It warns his friend against false teachers who are endangering her. There is: (1) A greeting and thanksgiving, 1-4. (2) An exhortation to obedience, 5-6. (3) Warning against anti-Christs, 7-9. (4) How to deal with false teachers, 10-11. (5) Conclusion, 12-13.

(3) **Third John.** This also is a personal letter written about the same time to his friend Gaius. He commends Gaius for his hospitality in receiving certain evangelists and expresses the hope of visiting him soon. There is (1) a greeting and prayer, 1-2. (2) Commends him for his godly walk and hospitality, 3-8. (3) Complains of the conduct of Diotrephes, 9-10. (4) Test of relation to God and worth of Diotrephes, 11-12. (5) Conclusions, 13-14.

(4) **Revelation.** This was the last book of the Bible to be written and was written by the Apostle John while in exile just before his death. It is a book of symbols and wars and earthquakes and thunders. In it are portrayed many fearful manifestations, all ending with peace or victory. It portrays the future rewards of those who are righteous, seen especially in the letters to the seven churches, Chs. 2-3. It is especially a book of optimism indicated in the fall of Babylon, the downfall of Satan and the triumph of the Lamb and his followers.

There are four types of interpreters: Those who think it all has to do with the past and think it was fulfilled in Jewish history down to the fall of Jerusalem

and in the history of pagan Rome; those who think it all has to do with the future and that the events to which it refers will take place just before, or just after the second coming of Christ; those who think some of it is past, some present and some in the future; those who object to these three as making too much of the time element and put all their emphasis on the moral and spiritual element of the book. They are concerned with ideas rather than events. It affords comfort to the suffering and persecuted of all ages showing them that God and the Lamb will triumph. The conflict will end and the enemies of our souls will be punished and all true Christians will be abundantly rewarded and admitted into the eternal home with God and His Son. The conflict will end and heaven will begin. The outline is rather simple. (1) Introduction, 1: 1-8. (2) The seven churches, 1: 9-3 end. (3) The seven seals, 4: 1—8: 1. (4) The seven trumpets, 8: 2-11 end. (5) The seven mystic figures, Chs. 12-14. (6) The seven vials, Chs. 15-16. (7) Three final conflicts and triumphs, 17: 1—22: 5. (8) Epilogue conclusion, 22: 6 end.

349. **End of Scripture History.** We have now come to the close of the work of Christ and his apostles. Christ has come in fulfillment of all the glorious promises and has opened up a source "of pardon and life, of joy and peace, of love and holiness, of liberty and progress, and of every other blessing precious to perishing men." His apostles have expounded to us the great mystery of his atoning death and of the way of salvation, and have taught us how to apply the principles of Christianity in our daily living. And now that John, the last of the apostles, is dead, the canon of the Scripture is closed, and the power of miracles removed. Christianity is left to win its own way by means of the efforts and prayers of the disciples and the grace which God ordinarily grants to them. Thus ends Scripture History—with a complete divine revelation, and with Christian churches set up to witness for Christ.

350. **Teachings of the Period.** It is difficult to reach any certain conclusions from a period of which we know so little. But we are perhaps safe in making the following observations. (1) That Christianity must always

make its way against opposition. (2) That Christian faith gives courage and joy in the most trying circumstances. (3) That Christianity will finally triumph over its enemies. This is especially brought out in the books of Revelation.

351. **For Oral and Written Discussion.** (1) From Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, and from histories study the reign of each Roman emperor of this period. (2) Learn something of the nature and contents of the Patristic literature named in the discussion above. (3) The four New Testament books assigned to this period. (4) Traditions concerning the work and death of the several apostles.

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